



# Dangers of EED

## (Elective Early Delivery)

Elective Early Deliveries: scheduled cesarean sections or labor induced before 39 weeks, specifically between 37-38 weeks

### Rates

- In 2012, the rate of EED was 20% of all U.S. births. The rate of EED in the U.S. doubled between 1990 and 2006. For comparison, Canada had an average rate of EED before 39 weeks of 4.7% between 2003-2010.
- The rate of EED has been declining across the U.S. -- down to 4.6% of births in 2013.
- In 2013, planned cesarean deliveries accounted for 15% of all cesarean births in the U.S.

### Risks for Baby

- The baby may have problems with oxygen supply if the umbilical cord is compromised.
- Babies born before 39 weeks of pregnancy have a 63% greater chance of death within the first year of life compared to babies born between 39 and 41 weeks.
- More likely to have vision and hearing problems after birth.
- Less likely to be able to suck, swallow, and stay awake long enough to eat after birth.
- If preterm induction doesn't work, it can lead to cesarean delivery. Cesarean delivery can cause increased risk for breathing and medical problems for the baby.
- Complications can arise from the baby's organs not being fully developed. A baby's brain at 35 weeks weighs only  $\frac{2}{3}$  of what it will weigh at 39-40 weeks. The brain is still forming all the connections necessary for coordination, movement, and learning. The baby's lungs and liver are also still developing -- early birth may cause the baby to have breathing problems and jaundice.
- Babies born before 39 weeks of pregnancy are at a 20% higher risk for birth complications, including breathing problems and cerebral palsy.
- Other complications:
  - Increased NICU admissions
  - Increased transient tachypnea of the newborn (TTN)
  - Increased respiratory distress syndrome (RDS)
  - Increased ventilator support
  - Increased suspected or proven sepsis
  - Increased newborn feeding problems and other transition issues
  - Increased risk for pulmonary hypertension





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## Risks for Mother

- Increased risk for infection
  - An elective early-term delivery requires induction, which involves medication or procedures to help start labor. This can lead to a prolonged labor requiring deliveries with instruments such as forceps or a vacuum and may cause infection or hemorrhaging.
  - Preterm induction can lead to uterine rupture in the mother, which causes serious bleeding.
- If preterm induction doesn't work, it can lead to cesarean delivery. Cesarean delivery can cause complications in future pregnancies and increases the chances of a future cesarean delivery and problems with the placenta.
  - It takes longer to recover from a c-section than from a vaginal birth (2-4 days in the hospital followed by 4-6 weeks recovery at home).
  - Potential complications from the c-section surgery include infections and bleeding.
- Stronger and more frequent contractions
- Increased risk for postpartum depression

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