

# Joint effort in standardizing due date estimation

September 23 2014

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(HealthDay)—The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine, and the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine have jointly released new recommendations for estimating gestational age and the anticipated due date for pregnant women. The Committee Opinion has been published in the October issue of *Obstetrics & Gynecology*.

Noting that accurate dating is a research and public health imperative, researchers from the Committee on Obstetric Practice evaluated methods for improving accurate dating of pregnancy in an effort to promote consistency and accuracy among medical professionals when assigning due dates.

The committee noted that the gestational due date should be determined

as soon as data from the last menstrual period, the first accurate ultrasound examination, or both are obtained. The due date should be discussed with the patient and recorded in the medical record. Subsequent changes to the due date should be reserved for rare circumstances and should be discussed with the patient and recorded, the researchers wrote. Gestational age at delivery, based on the methods outlined for estimating the due date, represents the best obstetric estimate for the purpose of clinical care and should be noted on the birth certificate. The best obstetric estimate, rather than estimates based on last menstrual period alone should be used as a measure of [gestational age](#) for purposes of surveillance and research.

In a organizational news release, James D. Goldberg, M.D., vice chair of the College's Committee on Obstetric Practice, which developed the Committee Opinion, stressed the importance of consistency between institutions that provide [obstetric](#) care. "A uniform approach to assigning an estimated due date will be helpful for clinicians in all types of pregnancies, particularly with women who have had prior medical problems during pregnancy," he said.

**More information:** [Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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Citation: Joint effort in standardizing due date estimation (2014, September 23) retrieved 23 June 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-09-joint-effort-standardizing-due-date.html>

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