

# Risks for Ebola virus-infected pregnant women discussed

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(HealthDay)—Ebola virus-infected pregnant women are at risk for adverse maternal and fetal outcomes, according to an article published online Jan. 14 in *BJOG: An International Journal of Obstetrics & Gynaecology*.

Aileen Kitching, from the Centre for Infectious Disease Surveillance and Control in London, and colleagues discussed the challenges, ethical dilemmas, and uncertainty related to the provision of safe obstetric interventions for Ebola virus-infected women.

The authors note that much understanding of Ebola virus disease comes from previous outbreaks in resource-limited settings in Africa, which provides a different health care context than the United Kingdom.

Pregnancy-related information was not routinely collected in previous Ebola outbreaks; data from the current outbreak are also relatively scarce. One report that focused on pregnancy outcome described intrauterine death in two 7-month-gestation Ebola virus-infected [pregnant women](#) in the convalescent stage of illness; both women survived. Pregnant women may be at increased risk of spontaneous abortion, pregnancy-related hemorrhage, stillbirth, and death when infected, according to limited evidence. Evidence suggests high maternal mortality among Ebola virus-infected pregnant women, although there is evidence of maternal survival after fetal loss. Reports indicate high neonatal mortality rates, with death reported in live infants born to Ebola virus-infected mothers, some in the late neonatal phase.

"Meeting maternal health needs in West Africa while better understanding and managing the risk to health care workers in the ongoing Ebola outbreak is the real challenge," the authors write.

**More information:** [Abstract](#)  
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