

# Early warning trigger tool could help reduce maternal morbidity

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(HealthDay)—Use of a clinical pathway-specific Maternal Early

Warning Trigger (MEWT) tool can reduce maternal morbidity, according to a study published in the April issue of the *American Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology*.

Laurence E. Shields, M.D., from the Marian Regional Medical Center in Santa Maria, Calif., and colleagues examined whether [maternal morbidity](#) could be reduced with the implementation of a MEWT tool. The tool was developed internally and implemented as a pilot project in six hospitals within a large hospital system. The tool addressed the most common areas of maternal morbidity: sepsis, cardiopulmonary dysfunction, preeclampsia-hypertension, and hemorrhage. To examine the effect of the MEWT tool, two time intervals were compared: a 24-month baseline control period and a 13-month MEWT study period.

The researchers found that during the two study periods, there were 36,832 deliveries at the pilot sites and 146,359 deliveries at the nonpilot sites. Significant reductions in U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-defined severe maternal morbidity and composite morbidity were seen with use of the MEWT tool. There was no change in intensive care unit admissions. At nonpilot sites, there were no changes in outcomes between the study periods.

"The variation in hospital delivery services at the pilot sites suggests that this maternal early warning tool would be suitable for use in the majority of maternity centers in the United States," the authors write.

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