Study weighs risks and benefits of birthing facilities

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In a study to be presented today at the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine's annual meeting, The Pregnancy Meeting ™, in Dallas, Texas, researchers will report findings that indicate that the risk of obstetric intervention is lower for women who deliver or intend to deliver outside of hospitals, but there are some higher risks for newborns intended for home births compared to hospital births.

The study, Neonatal Outcomes Associated with Intended Place of Birth: Birth Centers and Home Birth Compared to Hospitals, examined whether neonatal outcomes differ in women who intended home births, and births that occurred at birthing centers compared to hospitals. They found that the risk of cesarean delivery was significantly lower for women who had or intended to give birth outside of hospitals; however, the risk of neonatal seizure and a 5-minute Apgar score (which assesses the health of newborns) of less than seven was much higher for intended home births.

"This trade-off between maternal benefit and neonatal risk of deliveries outside of hospitals should be weighed in the decision regarding birthing facility preferences," said Yvonne W. Cheng, MD, PhD, with the University of California, San Francisco, Obstetrics & Gynecology, San Francisco, Calif., and the study's lead author.

In addition to Cheng, the study was conducted by Jonathan Snowden, PhD, and Aaron Caughey, MD, PhD, both with the Oregon Health & Science University, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Portland,

Ore.

More information: A copy of the abstract is available at www.smfmnewsroom.org/annual-me … 1-meeting-abstracts/

Provided by Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine

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