

Cervical Length Measurement

Preterm birth is the leading cause of serious health problems for newborn babies, potentially leading to brain damage, lifelong illness and even infant death. Often, an ultrasound of the cervix in mid-pregnancy can alert your physician to an increase in the risk of preterm birth. This procedure measures the length of the cervix. Upon discovering preterm risk, your physician can prescribe PROGESTERONE, a pregnancy hormone.

Ask your doctor about cervical length measurement if:

- You've previously had a birth before 37 weeks' gestation
- You have a risk factor for preterm birth such as:
 - a history of bladder, vaginal or sexually transmitted infections
 - surgery on your cervix (LEEP or Cone biopsy)
 - a pregnancy after fertility treatment (even if it's just one)
 - are African-American (African-American women have twice the risk of preterm birth)
 - have a body mass index (BMI) less than 19.6 or greater than 35
 - periodontal disease
- You've had or are experiencing any of these symptoms for more than one day:
 - pelvic pressure
 - abdominal tightening with or especially *without* pain
 - thin, watery, mucous discharge – any color but especially pink/tan/bloody
 - cramping like a menstrual period
 - persistent lower backache
 - feeling as though something "isn't right"
- You're scheduled to have an ultrasound at 18-24 weeks of pregnancy

More than half of the women who deliver preterm have no risk factors! Many doctors believe that all pregnant women should have a cervical length measurement in addition to their fetal anatomy ultrasound — even women who have none of the risk factors listed above. **Ask your doctor or nurse about cervical length measurement.**



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

WEXNER MEDICAL CENTER