Complication Rate 41% in ART Pregnancy Study

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WASHINGTON — Complications including gestational diabetes, placenta previa, and hypertension occurred in 41% of assisted reproductive technology pregnancies, based on data from 293 pregnancies.

"Increased fetal and maternal surveillance is warranted in these pregnancies," wrote Dr. Elena Chinea and colleagues from the Centro de Asistencia a la Reproducción Humana de Canarias S.L., Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain, in a poster presented at the annual meeting of the American Society for Reproductive Medicine.

To determine the nature and incidence of adverse events for assisted reproductive technology (ART) pregnancies, as well as the effect of increasing maternal age, the researchers analyzed the rates of preexisting maternal conditions, pregnancy complications, labor and delivery complications, and perinatal outcomes in pregnancies from 1,056 cycles of in vitro fertilization with intracytoplasmic sperm injection.

Preexisting maternal conditions were noted in 15% of the women, and the incidence increased consistently from 10% in women under 31 years to 28% in women over 40 years. Gestational diabetes occurred in 18% overall (16% of singleton and 25% of twin pregnancies). But no age-related increases in rates of gestational diabetes or pregnancy-induced hypertension were seen.

As for labor and delivery complications, the overall incidence of premature labor was 13%, and the rate for twin pregnancies was double the rate for singleton pregnancies (20% vs. 10%). The average overall cesarean section rate was 49%, with an average of 40% in singleton pregnancies and an average of 77% for twin pregnancies.

Low birth weights occurred in 30% of the infants overall (11% of singletons, 51% of twins). Very low birth weights occurred in 4.5% of the infants overall (2% of singletons and 7% of twins). ■