

THE LENGTH OF THE CERVIX AND THE RISK OF SPONTANEOUS PREMATURE DELIVERY

In 2915 pregnant women examined by transvaginal sonography, the average cervical length was found to be 35.2 ± 8.3 mm (10th % =22 mm and the 90th%=48 mm) and 33.7 ± 8.5 mm at 24 and 28 weeks respectively. The cervical length was normally distributed in both gestational ages. The overall rate of preterm delivery prior to 35 weeks gestation in the group was 4.3 %. With this as a reference point relative risks and absolute percent risks are given in the following table for patients examined at 24 weeks:*

Cervical length (mm)	RR for delivery <35 wks	% risk for delivery <35 wks
<40	1.98	8 %
<35	2.35	10 %
<30	3.79	16 %
<26	6.19	26 %
<22	9.49	40 %
<13	19.99	86 %

In patients examined at 28 weeks and beyond, the relative risk is 2.80, 3.52, 5.39, 9.57, 13.88, and 24.94 respectively.

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*Patients examined earlier are most likely at even higher risk than those examined at 24 weeks.

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