

Fredrick Sandoval, M.P.A.
Deputy SecretaryGary L.J. Girón, M.B.A.
Deputy SecretaryJoyce Naseyowma-Chalan, M.P.H.
Director, Public Health Division

Provider Alert

From: NM Maternal Mortality Review

PLACENTA ACCRETA

The New Mexico Maternal Mortality Review in its review of maternal deaths over more than 10 years has identified hemorrhagic complications from placenta accreta as a possible preventable cause of maternal death. Providers should be aware of the following:

1. Risk Factors for placenta accreta include: older gravidas (>35yo), placenta previa, grand multiparity, history of uterine curettage, prior c-sections, prior uterine surgery, submucous leiomyoma, and Asherman's syndrome.
2. Cesarean section increases the risk for placenta previa and placenta accreta.
 - a. The risk for placenta accreta increases in the presence of a placenta previa or a low-lying anterior placenta with each prior cesarean section (30% risk with one prior C section, 50% with 2 prior C-sections).¹
 - b. All pregnant patients who have had previous cesarean sections should receive ultrasound evaluation in order to evaluate placenta location.
 - c. If placenta previa or an anterior low-lying placenta is noted especially into the third trimester, the patient should be considered at high risk for placenta accreta.
3. Placenta accreta may be suggested by an unexplained elevation of maternal serum AFP.
4. Strong consideration should be given for referral to a maternal-fetal medicine specialist for,
 - a. further evaluation (including sophisticated imaging studies), and
 - b. recommendations when this situation is encountered.
5. Patients with high suspicion of placenta accreta should be delivered in a setting that is capable of providing of providing intensive intra-operative and postoperative care due to the high risk for life threatening hemorrhage.
6. Even with the antenatal diagnosis of placenta accreta and with maximum coordinated care and surgery, placenta accreta has been associated with a 7% maternal mortality rate.

¹ O'Brien JM, Barton JR, Donaldson ES. The management of placenta percreta: Conservative and operative strategies. Am J Obstet and Gynecol Vol. 75, Number 6. December 1996.