

Fact Sheet

# New home birth study from the MANA Statistics Dataset shows that Planned Home Birth with Skilled Midwives is Safe for Low-Risk Pregnancies

The largest study of planned, midwife-led home birth in the U.S. to date, reported outcomes for nearly 17,000 women who went in to labor intending to deliver at home between 2004 and 2009.

## **Safe Outcomes with Positive Benefits**

- High rate of completed home birth (89.1%)
- High rate of vaginal birth (93.6%)
- High rate of completed vaginal birth after cesarean (VBAC; 87.0%)
- Low intrapartum and neonatal fetal death rate overall:
  - 2.06 per 1000 intended home births (includes all births)
  - 1.61 per 1000 intended home births excluding breech, vbac, twins, gestational diabetes, and preeclampsia.
- Low rate of low APGAR scores
- Extremely high rate of breastfeeding (97.7%) at 6 weeks

## **Few Emergency Transfers to Hospital Care**

 Primary reason for transport was "failure to progress." Transfer for urgent reasons, such as "fetal distress" was rare.

### Low Rates of Intervention

- Cesarean section rate of 5.2%
- Less than 5% used pitocin or epidural anesthesia

### **More Information**

Results for low-risk mothers are consistent with most studies of planned homebirth. For more information on relative risks and decision making see MANA Home Birth Data 2004-2009 Consumer Considerations at <a href="http://www.cfmidwifery.org/pdf/MANAHBStudy04-09Considerations.pdf">http://www.cfmidwifery.org/pdf/MANAHBStudy04-09Considerations.pdf</a> and "Safety" in Childbirth: What Does This Mean? What is "Safe" Enough? at <a href="http://cfmidwifery.org/pdf/Safety%20FINAL.pdf">http://cfmidwifery.org/pdf/Safety%20FINAL.pdf</a>.

Data were collected prospectively. Midwives logged in information for each client throughout her pregnancy, birth, and up to 6 weeks postpartum. This method of data collection reduces selection bias since outcomes were not known at the time they were entered into the MANA Stats system at onset of care.

#### References:

- 1. Cheyney, M., Bovbjerg, M., Everson, C., Gordon, W., Hannibal, D., and Vedam, S. (2014). Development and Validation of a National Data Registry for midwife-led births: The Midwives Alliance of North America Statistics Project 2.0 dataset. *Journal of Midwifery and Women's Health*, 59(1).
- 2. Cheyney, M., Bovbjerg, M., Everson, C., Gordon, W., Hannibal, D., and Vedam, S. (2014). Outcomes of care for 16,924 planned home births in the United States: The Midwives Alliance of North America Statistics Project, 2004 to 2009. *Journal of Midwifery and Women's Health*, 59(1).