

Who's Making a Difference at L+M

L+M's Published Data Could Impact Gestational Diabetes Care Nationally



L+M data being reported in a national medical journal this month by Dr. Stephen Quevedo and the L+M Joslin Diabetes team has the potential to help doctors across the country provide more precise care for mothers with gestational diabetes and, thereby, improve the health of their babies.

"We're very excited about this, and are hopeful this data can do a lot of good," Dr. Quevedo said. "We really do think we can reduce, at least somewhat, the risk of babies having diabetes, obesity and other health risks later in life, and what's better than that!?"

The article, currently available in the on-line version of the Journal of Maternal-Fetal and Neonatal Medicine, reports how insulin to control gestational diabetes can usually be more appropriately prescribed when following ultrasound data.

Essentially, by measuring a baby's abdominal circumference in an ultrasound, and comparing that to other babies at similar gestational development, the baby's percentile ranking can determine whether the use of insulin is likely to be statistically beneficial.

Diet, exercise and expert medical advice are all integral parts of the equation for each patient, Dr. Quevedo noted, but a key benefit to the ultrasound approach, he said, is to prevent the overuse of insulin.

"When insulin is used unnecessarily, some mothers deliver low-weight babies, and this can cause even more health risks than those facing overweight babies," he said.

Therefore, by following the ultrasound numbers and corresponding percentiles for each baby, better outcomes are being documented.

The ultrasound approach is not new, Dr. Quevedo noted, but the benefits of using the approach, up until now, have only been thoroughly reported in research studies. The L+M team collected six years worth of real-world data from more than 400 L+M patients between the years of 2006 and 2012, and then demonstrated statistically that the method can be used effectively in a local diabetes clinic.

The L+M article, which will also be included in an upcoming printed edition of the Journal, is titled: "Translation of Fetal Abdominal Circumference Guided Therapy of Gestational Diabetes Mellitus Complicated by Maternal Obesity to an Outpatient Setting."

"The key word is 'translational,'" Dr. Quevedo said, "because, with all trials, if you can't translate them to the real world, people are going to be reticent to follow the approach. But we've shown that a doctor in Mississippi – a doctor anywhere – can use this approach, and we believe it can improve results and help mothers deliver healthier babies."

The L+M study article is authored by Dr. Quevedo, Dr. Marit Bovbjerg and Randi Kington. "Dr. Bovbjerg's help as an academic epidemiologist/biostatistician was critical to our success," Dr. Quevedo noted.