

APPENDIX D: PRENATAL CARE

Kessner Index

The classification of prenatal care as adequate, intermediate, or inadequate is derived from the Institute of Medicine's Three-Factor Prenatal Care Index.¹ The classes of care are in accordance with recommendations for prenatal care set forth by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the World Health Organization. This classification scheme accounts for length of gestation by requiring fewer prenatal visits for pregnancies with short gestation time. Records with missing information (i.e. last normal menstrual period, gestation weeks, number of visits, or month prenatal care began) are assigned to the inadequate prenatal care category.

The gestation weeks are calculated by subtracting the last menstrual date from the child's birth date. If the last menstrual date is missing from the birth record, the doctor's (or other medical professional's) estimate of gestation is used. The accuracy of the level of prenatal care is as reliable as the information provided by the mother and her caregiver.

The table below shows the Institute of Medicine's Three-Factor Prenatal Care Index.

TABLE D.1 KESSNER INDEX

GESTATION	TRIMESTER CARE BEGAN AND/OR NUMBER OF PRENATAL VISITS	LEVEL OF CARE
<=13 Weeks	At least 1 visit	Adequate
	No visits	Intermediate
14-17 Weeks	1st trimester and at least 2 visits	Adequate
	1st or 2nd trimester and 1 visit	Intermediate
	No prenatal visits	Inadequate
18-21 Weeks	1st trimester and at least 3 visits	Adequate
	1st or 2nd trimester and 1-2 visits	Intermediate
	No prenatal visits	Inadequate
22-25 Weeks	1st trimester and at least 4 visits	Adequate
	1st or 2nd trimester and 2-3 visits	Intermediate
	3rd trimester or no more than 1 visit	Inadequate
26-29 Weeks	1st trimester and at least 5 visits	Adequate
	1st or 2nd trimester and 2-4 visits	Intermediate
	3rd trimester or no more than 1 visit	Inadequate
30-31 Weeks	1st trimester and at least 6 visits	Adequate
	1st or 2nd trimester and 3-5 visits	Intermediate
	3rd trimester or no more than 2 visits	Inadequate
32-33 Weeks	1st trimester and at least 7 visits	Adequate
	1st or 2nd trimester and 4-6 visits	Intermediate
	3rd trimester or no more than 3 visits	Inadequate
34-35 Weeks	1st trimester and at least 8 visits	Adequate
	1st or 2nd trimester and 5-7 visits	Intermediate
	3rd trimester or no more than 4 visits	Inadequate
=>36 Weeks	1st trimester and at least 9 visits	Adequate
	1st or 2nd trimester and 5-8 visits	Intermediate
	3rd trimester or no more than 4 visits	Inadequate

1 Kessner, D. "Infant Death: An Analysis by Maternal Risk and Health Care." Institute of Medicine, *Contrasts in Health Status, Volume 1*, 1973. National Academy of Sciences, Washington, DC, pp 58-60.