Somali women have lower preterm birth rates than other ethnicities

Stephen Contag, Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Women’s Health, University of Minnesota

Objectives: We have previously documented increased post-term birth rates among Somali women. Our objective is to compare PTB rates of singleton or twin pregnancies with spontaneous onset of labor between Somali women and those of other ethnicities. Our hypothesis is that Somali women have lower PTB rates than women of other ethnicities.

Methods: With IRB exemption we used birth certificate data from 2011-2016, selected women between 24 and 36 weeks of gestation with singleton or twin gestations with spontaneous onset of labor. Compared birth rates by ethnic groups according to gestational age categories using ANOVA, and using chi-square analysis. Gestational age categories included <33 weeks (early PTB), 33-36 weeks (PTB), and 37-41 weeks (term birth). We calculated the odds ratios for early PTB and PTB for Somali women compared with women of other ethnicities.

Conclusion: Somali women have lower spontaneous PTB rates compared with women of other ethnicities. Future work will evaluate placental, genomic, nutritional and metabolic factors that may affect outcomes.