



## Clinical Management of Twin Pregnancies

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Early diagnosis and subsequent management of twin pregnancy resulted in a considerable reduction of preterm deliveries (26% vs 61% for late diagnoses).

**Key words:** Early diagnosis, Twin pregnancy, Preterm delivery

The aim of this communication is to stress the favorable effect of early diagnosis of twinning on the resulting preterm-birth rate as assessed through a study of 148 twin pregnancies.

Prevention of preterm birth was not based on a suppression of physical activity. No systematic bed rest, either at home or in hospital, was proposed. The measures were: 1) work leave at 20 weeks of pregnancy or as early as the diagnosis was made, and 2) avoidance of long traveling, moving, or excessive work at home. After 28 weeks, the pregnant woman was visited at home by a midwife with the object of looking for real avoidance of physical efforts, education, psychologic support, and medical complications (threatened preterm labor, high blood pressure). Hospital stay, with or without betamimetics, was only indicated for complications. Cervical suture was not routine, but was done only with a previous history of preterm labor, of induced abortion or short cervix at the beginning of pregnancy. A special outpatient clinic was devoted to the twin pregnancies and all the cases were followed by the same team since 1976. The growth of the fetuses was followed by serial ultrasounds.

As shown in the Table, preterm births were considerably more frequent when the diagnosis of twins was made after 28 weeks (61% vs 26%). The establishment, in 1976, of the special clinic for twin pregnancies may be related to the observed reduction of preterm births. Before that, in 1973–1975, 56 twin pregnancies were followed and the preterm birth rate was of 46% – 21% at 28–34 weeks and 25% at 35–36 weeks. Then, in 1976–1978, 103 twin pregnancies were followed and the preterm birth rate was of 33% – 8% at 28–34 weeks and 17% at 35–36 weeks.

*TABLE. Early Diagnosis of Twin Pregnancy and Preterm Birth*

Time of diagnosis	Time of birth						Total	
	28–34 weeks		35–36 weeks		≥ 37 weeks		n	%
	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Before 28 weeks	8	8	19	18	77	74	104	100
After 28 weeks	9	20	18	41	17	39	44	100