Assessing Screening and Treatment Patterns for Short Cervical Length in Pregnancy

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: To survey US-trained US (US) physicians on their screening and treatment of short cervical length (SCL) and to determine any barriers to universal cervical length screening (CLS) in women who are at risk for preterm birth.

Study Design: Physicians who responded to the US were recruited across the 9 US Census divisions through web-based surveys. The study was conducted from April 30 to May 11, 2016. The survey included 28 questions related to CLS screening and treatment practices. The survey was administered to 500 physicians and 228 successfully completed.

RESULTS

- Physicians were asked about how frequently they prescribe vaginal progesterone for cervical screening (n = 228). The most common definition for short cervix was ≤ 25 mm, regardless of practice setting and history of spontaneous PTB (59% for patients without and 62% for patients with a history of spontaneous PTB).
- Screening and treatment patterns: Physicians reported that a median of 90% of their adult pregnant patients receive immediate treatment for patients with SCL, followed by transabdominal ultrasound (TUA) (61%), ultrasound (TVU) (52%), and transvaginal ultrasound (TVU) (39%). The most common cut-off value for short cervix was ≤ 25 mm, regardless of practice setting and history of spontaneous PTB.
- The percentage of physicians reporting having TVU machines in their practices was 55%. The sample was mostly white (76%), non-Hispanic (96%), and male (55%). The mean (SD) age was 49 (10) years.

CONCLUSIONS

- Most physicians surveyed use progestogens to treat SCL, with approximately half using vaginal and half using intramuscular progestogens. Physicians reported using multiple sources of evidence to guide their patient care, with 83% reporting use of established clinical guidelines, and 2% reported using no treatment.
- The most common CLS screening method was TVU, followed by TUA and TVU. The most common CLS cut-off value was ≤ 25 mm, regardless of practice setting and history of spontaneous PTB.
- Physicians reported that a median of 90% of their adult pregnant patients receive immediate treatment for patients with SCL.

REFERENCES


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