



Prematurity Factors in Colorado

Prematurity is defined as a baby born three or more weeks before its due date.

(36 – 33 weeks preterm, less than 32 weeks very preterm.)

- ❖ In an average week in Colorado 158 babies are born preterm. 23 babies are born very preterm.
- ❖ During 2002 in Colorado, there were 8,235 preterm births, representing 12.0% of all live births.
- ❖ Prematurity is the leading cause of death in newborns in Colorado.
- ❖ Prematurity is the leading contributor to lifelong disabilities for children including developmental delays, chronic respiratory problems, vision & hearing problems and loss.
- ❖ National annual cost of providing medical care for premature babies is \$13.6 billion.

Some of the contributing risk factors causing prematurity.

- Previous preterm or low birth weight births
- Multiple births
- Smoking during pregnancy
- Receiving late or no prenatal care during pregnancy
- Birth mothers under the age of 20 or over the age of 35
- Various medical conditions

High Altitude has been identified as a risk factor but one that will not be focused on due to the factor not being able to be changed.

Prematurity Prevention

- Be aware of the prematurity risk factors and acknowledge that you could be at risk.
- Seek prenatal care early and attend regular prenatal visits.
- Know the warning signs of mature labor.
 - Frequent contractions
 - Menstrual like cramps
 - Low, dull backache
 - Pelvic pressure
 - Change in vaginal discharge
 - Abdominal cramping
 - General feeling that something is not right

Newborn Hope is an all-volunteer organization that provides training, equipment and funding for programs designed to prevent and treat premature pregnancies. Over the past 33 years Newborn Hope has raised over \$3 million to help with prematurity prevention in Colorado. Newborn Hope publishes “Carrying to Term” a booklet providing valuable information for preventing premature births & low-birthweight babies.