

Preterm birth: In Tennessee, there were 11,947 preterm births that represent 14.7% of all live births. (2005)
Infants born prematurely are more likely to be born at low birthweight and are at increased risk for death within the 1st year of life.

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Each week in Tennessee, 230 babies are born preterm, 149 babies are born at low birthweight, and 14 babies will die before their first birthday.

LATE PRETERM INFANTS

- A full term pregnancy is defined as 40 completed weeks of pregnancy. Infants born at or before 37 completed weeks of pregnancy are considered preterm.
- About 1 in 10 live births in Tennessee is late preterm (34-36 weeks gestation). Late preterm infants account for the vast majority of early births. (National Center for Health Statistics)
- Babies born in the 34-36 week window were 6 times more likely to die in the first week of life than that of full-term babies, and 3 times as likely over the first year of life. (Journal of Pediatrics, 2007)
- Late preterm infants typically receive routine care in well-baby nurseries and are presumed low risk. Problems may not be noticed until illness is more advanced and symptoms are evident. (National Institute on Child Health and Human Development -NICHD)
- Late preterm babies, even though they are close to term, are at greater risk of serious problems such as temperature instability, respiratory distress, delayed brain development, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, jaundice, re-hospitalization, and feeding difficulties. (NICHD)
- The lungs and brain are among the last systems to fully mature during gestation, and complications can arise due to the immaturity. (NICHD)

OUR RECOMMENDATION: *Support improvement of pregnancy outcomes for infants and continue funding of initiatives that benefit pregnant women and children.*

A baby's brain at 35 weeks weighs only two-thirds of what it will weigh at 40 weeks.



35 weeks



40 weeks

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT THE MARCH OF DIMES, TENNESSEE CHAPTER AT 615-399-3200.