

WHAT IS SEVERE MATERNAL MORBIDITY?

Each year approximately 3,000 women in New York City (NYC) die or almost die from serious childbirth complications. These complications are known as severe maternal morbidity (SMM) and include heavy bleeding, blood clots, serious infections and kidney failure. Black women are three times more likely to experience SMM than White women. The City is committed to eliminating the racial gap in SMM and reducing the overall number of childbirth complications and deaths.

“The birth of a child should be a joyous moment for all families, and it is unacceptable that [we] have so many Black mothers who are dying because of complications during childbirth.”

DR. HERMINIA PALACIO
DEPUTY MAYOR FOR HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



WHAT THE NEW YORK CITY HEALTH DEPARTMENT IS DOING TO HELP REDUCE SEVERE MATERNAL MORBIDITY

Maternity Hospital Quality Improvement Network

The Health Department works with hospitals throughout the city to collect information about women's experiences with SMM to improve clinician training and quality of care. This initiative, called the Maternity Hospital Quality Improvement Network, also trains providers to deliver respectful care to all NYC women, especially women of color. Respectful care means that providers share information with their patients about patients' rights and best practices for before, during and after birth. To learn more about respectful care, visit nyc.gov/health and search for **sexual and reproductive justice (SRJ)**.

Maternal Care Connection

The Health Department launched the Maternal Care Connection program to improve care for childbirth and primary care in Central Brooklyn. The program also aims to educate the community about respectful care.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP REDUCE SMM

- Encourage your local hospital to participate in the Maternity Hospital Quality Improvement Network.
- Learn about the Birth Justice Defenders — local residents who promote respectful care at birth. For more information, email BirthJustice@health.nyc.gov.
- Encourage your local lawmakers to support maternal and family health.
- If you're pregnant, ask your health care provider about common problems during pregnancy and childbirth. Visit nyc.gov/health, search for **SRJ** and download the "NYC Standards for Respectful Care at Birth." This brochure can help you speak to your health care provider about the care you should receive before, during and after birth.
- Enroll in free or low-cost health insurance during pregnancy: Call **311**, or visit nyc.gov/health and search for **health insurance**.

Services and Resources to Support Healthy Pregnancy

These services and resources are free for those who qualify, regardless of immigration status:

- Nurse-Family Partnership
- Newborn Home Visiting Program
- Healthy Start Brooklyn
- Family wellness classes at the Health Department's Neighborhood Health Action Centers

For more information, call **311** or visit nyc.gov/health and search for **pregnancy resources**.