

Questions Commonly Asked About PRAMS

What is PRAMS?

PRAMS (Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System) is a joint research project between the Florida Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Our purpose is to find out why some babies are born healthy and others are not. To do this, our questionnaire asks new mothers questions about their behaviors and experiences around the time of their pregnancy. Each year in Florida there are hundreds of babies born with serious health problems. Many of these babies die. We need your help to find out why. No matter how your pregnancy went, your answers will help us learn more about ways to improve the chances for future mothers and babies in Florida.

Will my answers be kept private?

Yes—all answers are kept completely private to the extent permitted by law. All answers given on the questionnaires will be grouped together to give us information on Florida mothers of new babies. In reports from this survey, no woman will be identified by name.

Is it really important that I answer these questions?

Yes! Because of the small number of mothers picked, it is important to have everyone's answers. Every pregnancy is different. To get a better overall picture of the health of mothers and babies in Florida, we need each mother selected to answer the questions. From the information you give us, we may be able to improve health care for women and children in Florida. We need to know what went *right* as well as what went wrong during your pregnancy. Your help is really important to the success of our program.

Some of the questions do not seem related to health care—why are they asked?

Many things in a mother's life may affect her pregnancy. These questions try to get the best picture of the new mother's health care and things that happened to her during pregnancy.

How was I chosen to participate in PRAMS?

Your name was picked by chance, like in a lottery, from the state birth certificate registry. You are one of a small number of women who were chosen to help us in this study.

Some of you ask to be taken off our list. Once you are picked by the computer, we consider you to be very special because the information only you can give us is so important. We need your help to create or change programs for women and children.

What if I want to ask more questions about PRAMS?

Please call us at our toll-free number **1-800-922-7475** and we will be happy to answer any other questions that you may have about PRAMS. If you prefer to complete the questionnaire over the telephone, please call us on the same number.





What is the Purpose of PRAMS?

The overall goal of PRAMS is to use information from new mothers to help improve the experiences and health of babies and mothers before, during, and after pregnancy and during the child's early infancy. PRAMS is designed to collect data on selected maternal behaviors for planning and evaluating prenatal health programs. PRAMS data is used to supplement state data from vital records and allow comparisons among states to develop and assess programs and policies for women and children.

Where Do You Get the Names of New Mothers?

We get all the information from the Florida Department of Health, Office of Vital Records and Vital Statistics. This is the office that produces your baby's birth certificate.

How is the Information Collected?

Data collection follows the guidance from the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Florida Department of Health randomly selects approximately 2,700 new mothers and sends them a survey questionnaire 2-5 months after giving birth. If there is no response from the mail survey, Department of Health PRAMS staff may contact the new mothers by telephone and interview them. The information from these survey respondents is processed to represent all Florida new mothers.

Can you give me some examples of the findings from the PRAMS survey?

In 2003, there were **207,920** live births in Florida. Among these newborns and their mothers:

- There were **102,824** White new mothers, **45,552** Black new mothers and **52,201** Hispanic new mothers;
- **87,642** new mothers were un-married, and **119,945** were married;
- **153,960** mothers got prenatal care in the first trimester, but **828** had no prenatal care at all;
- **67,847** mothers had C-section deliveries and **140,993** had vaginal deliveries;
- **7,363** births to mothers between the ages of 10 and 17 and **131,487** births to mothers older than 30 years of age;
- **16,028** babies were born with a birth weight under 2500 grams and **191,860** babies had a normal birth weight (equal to or greater than 2500 grams birth weight);
- **71,833** babies born in households with an income of less than \$15,600, **57,020** born in households with incomes of greater than \$39,601.
- **20,609** new mothers live in crowded households with more than one person per room.

More reports on PRAMS data can be found on the Bureau of Epidemiology website:
http://www.doh.state.fl.us/disease_ctrl/epi/prams/prams.htm.

Contact: Helen Marshall, PRAMS Coordinator, Florida DOH, **1-800-922-7475**.