

Canadian Prenatal Multiple-Birth Course Survey

Survey Introduction

This PRENATAL MULTIPLE-BIRTH COURSE SURVEY was administered by Multiple Births Canada (MBC) during the summer of 2011. It was directed at all prenatal course providers in Canada.

Since 1978 MBC has provided support, education, research, and advocacy to individuals, families, groups, and organizations with a personal or professional interest in multiple birth issues.



As part of our advocacy work, MBC chose the theme ***“Prenatal education and professional support must reflect the unique needs of Canada’s multiple-birth community”*** for National Multiple Births Awareness Day 2011.

As part of the awareness campaign, MBC compiled a list of prenatal courses offered by Canadian health agencies, professionals, and individuals and sent the following survey to these contacts. The goal was to review the scope of multiple-birth specific information being shared with expectant couples while creating awareness of topics that should be covered. MBC hopes this will draw attention to the geographic areas lacking this important educational resource and encourage professionals in these communities to offer a prenatal multiple-birth specific course.

An invitation to complete this survey was sent to health units/authorities across Canada in June of 2011. It was answered by 29 respondents of which 22 were from Ontario representing every area of the province. The other 7 respondents were from: British Columbia (2), Alberta, Saskatchewan (2), Manitoba and Quebec.

Our thanks to these respondents:

- Babies in Belly ON
- Brandon Regional Health Authority MB
- Chatham-Kent Public Health Unit ON
- Clarice Perkins BC
- County of Lambton Community Health Services Department ON
- Credit Valley Hospital ON
- Fraser Health, BC
- Grey Bruce Health Unit ON
- Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit ON
- Halton Region ON
- Heartland Health Region SK
- Lambton Health ON
- Leeds Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit ON
- Lynda P. Haddon ON
- Middlesex-London Health Unit ON
- Montérégie Social Services PQ
- Mothercraft of Ottawa-Carleton ON
- Mount Sinai Hospital Prenatal Education Program ON
- Northwestern Health Unit ON
- Region of Peel ON
- Regional Municipality of York ON
- Royal Alexandria Hospital AB
- Saskatoon Health Region SK
- Simcoe Muskoka Health ON
- Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre ON
- The Ottawa Hospital ON
- Thunder Bay District Health Unit ON
- Tummies to Toes ON
- York Region Community and Health Services ON

3. Who are the class instructors?

	Yes	No	Not sure
Nurses	80.8% (21)	19.2% (5)	0.0% (0)
Parents of multiples	27.8% (5)	72.2% (13)	0.0% (0)
Paid health care staff	68.2% (15)	31.8% (7)	0.0% (0)
Volunteers	5.9% (1)	88.2% (15)	5.9% (1)

4. What is the format of this course?

	Yes	No	Not sure
Classroom setting	96.6% (28)	3.4% (1)	0.0% (0)
Teleconference	0.0% (0)	94.4% (17)	5.6% (1)
Online	23.5% (4)	70.6% (12)	5.9% (1)
Telephone support	44.4% (8)	50.0% (9)	5.6% (1)
Mailed out materials	27.8% (5)	61.1% (11)	11.1% (2)
DVD self-administered	5.6% (1)	88.9% (16)	5.6% (1)

5. Tell us about the course:

Tell us about the course: How many hours of instruction for the entire course?	From 6 to 24 hours. 29 Responses Average length is 11.5 hours
How many hours cover multiple-birth topics?	In general prenatal classes: 0-1 hours In multiple-birth specific classes: majority of time
How often do you run the course?	Responses varied from every month to 3/year
What is the course fee?	Prices range from free to \$125

6. Tell us more about the course:

	Yes	No	Not sure
Do you provide printed resources specific to multiples and multiple pregnancy?	44.8% (13)	48.3% (14)	6.9% (2)
Do you provide information about Multiple Births Canada?	58.6% (17)	34.5% (10)	6.9% (2)
Is there a post-delivery follow-up class or social event?	27.6% (8)	58.6% (17)	13.8% (4)

7. Course Content:

	Yes	No	Not sure
Emotional aspect of a multiple pregnancy	38.5% (10)	57.7% (15)	3.8% (1)
Biology of multiples	30.8% (8)	65.4% (17)	3.8% (1)
Incidence of multiple births	34.6% (9)	61.5% (16)	3.8% (1)
Multiple-birth specific terms and definitions	32.0% (8)	60.0% (15)	8.0% (2)
Possible risks to mother during a multiple pregnancy	52.0% (13)	44.0% (11)	4.0% (1)
Development in utero	42.3% (11)	53.8% (14)	3.8% (1)
<i>Possible risks to babies during a multiple pregnancy</i>	42.3% (11)	53.8% (14)	3.8% (1)
- twin-to-twin-transfusion syndrome	20.0% (5)	68.0% (17)	12.0% (3)
- prematurity and/or low birth weight	69.2% (18)	23.1% (6)	7.7% (2)
Father/Partner's Role	81.5% (22)	11.1% (3)	7.4% (2)
Prenatal testing and genetic counselling	48.0% (12)	36.0% (9)	16.0% (4)
Counselling and resources for miscarriage, stillbirth or loss of a multiple	25.0% (6)	70.8% (17)	4.2% (1)
How to monitor babies' health during a multiple pregnancy	32.0% (8)	60.0% (15)	8.0% (2)
<i>Managing a multiple pregnancy</i>	40.0% (10)	56.0% (14)	4.0% (1)
- nausea	65.4% (17)	30.8% (8)	3.8% (1)
- prenatal rest	74.1% (20)	22.2% (6)	3.7% (1)
- exercise	63.0% (17)	29.6% (8)	7.4% (2)
- employment – working adjustments	70.4% (19)	22.2% (6)	7.4% (2)

	Yes	No	Not sure
- sleep	70.4% (19)	22.2% (6)	7.4% (2)
- pelvic girdle pressure	32.0% (8)	64.0% (16)	4.0% (1)
- bedrest	56.0% (14)	36.0% (9)	8.0% (2)
- proper nutrition	69.2% (18)	23.1% (6)	7.7% (2)
Emotional attachment during pregnancy and afterwards - bonding with more than one baby	40.0% (10)	56.0% (14)	4.0% (1)
Signs and Symptoms of Premature Labour and what to do	96.3% (26)	3.7% (1)	0.0% (0)
<i>Communicating with your health care team during pregnancy regarding babies' birth</i>	81.5% (22)	14.8% (4)	3.7% (1)
- Location of choice and back-up plans	68.0% (17)	20.0% (5)	12.0% (3)
- Tour of delivery facility	72.0% (18)	24.0% (6)	4.0% (1)
- Labour, delivery and pain management	88.9% (24)	11.1% (3)	0.0% (0)
- Involvement of doulas or midwives	92.6% (25)	7.4% (2)	0.0% (0)
- Types of delivery – vaginal and c-section	92.6% (25)	7.4% (2)	0.0% (0)
What to expect in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)	44.0% (11)	48.0% (12)	8.0% (2)
Help needed before and after the delivery	92.6% (25)	7.4% (2)	0.0% (0)
Connecting with community resources before and after the delivery	96.3% (26)	3.7% (1)	0.0% (0)
Organizing your home for the arrival of your newborns	80.8% (21)	19.2% (5)	0.0% (0)
Strategies for handling staggered release dates from hospital	16.0% (4)	80.0% (20)	4.0% (1)
Preparing siblings for the babies' arrival	28.0% (7)	72.0% (18)	0.0% (0)
Zygosity testing – timing, types and reasons for doing it	16.0% (4)	80.0% (20)	4.0% (1)

	Yes	No	Not sure
<i>Breast and/or bottle-feeding multiples</i>	61.5% (16)	38.5% (10)	0.0% (0)
- how to - equipment	60.0% (15)	32.0% (8)	8.0% (2)
- support and resources	88.0% (22)	12.0% (3)	0.0% (0)
Recognizing and fostering each baby's individuality – names, caregiving, etc.	29.2% (7)	70.8% (17)	0.0% (0)
<i>Clothing and equipment needs</i>	64.0% (16)	36.0% (9)	0.0% (0)
- car seats	92.0% (23)	8.0% (2)	0.0% (0)
- stroller	60.9% (14)	39.1% (9)	0.0% (0)
- vehicle	45.8% (11)	54.2% (13)	0.0% (0)
<i>Newborn/infant care of your babies</i>	84.0% (21)	16.0% (4)	0.0% (0)
- fostering positive sleep habits	84.0% (21)	16.0% (4)	0.0% (0)
- co-bedding	84.6% (22)	11.5% (3)	3.8% (1)
- swaddling techniques	66.7% (16)	33.3% (8)	0.0% (0)
- getting the babies on the same schedule	24.0% (6)	72.0% (18)	4.0% (1)
- bath time	80.0% (20)	20.0% (5)	0.0% (0)
- coping with crying	88.0% (22)	12.0% (3)	0.0% (0)
- organizing your caregivers and volunteers	64.0% (16)	32.0% (8)	4.0% (1)
<i>Post partum issues:</i>	91.3% (21)	8.7% (2)	0.0% (0)
- depression and its effects on both parents	92.3% (24)	7.7% (2)	0.0% (0)
- sleep deprivation	92.3% (24)	7.7% (2)	0.0% (0)

	Yes	No	Not Sure
- nutrition	76.9% (20)	15.4% (4)	7.7% (2)
- need for social contact	92.3% (24)	7.7% (2)	0.0% (0)
Making time for your parental relationship	92.0% (23)	8.0% (2)	0.0% (0)
Keeping your multiples safe	44.0% (11)	48.0% (12)	8.0% (2)

8. Do you have any final comments on the course or this survey?

I only checked off what applies in class for singletons....if the topics were specific to multiples then none of them apply ...unless there is someone in class who is having multiples...then many of them apply.

30/6/2011 1:22 PM

We have a small birth cohort in our large rural area. We address some multiples aspects, but not all. We are in close proximity to an urban center with many more resources. Typically we encourage couples to attend our classes to learn about local resources and we refer them to Multiple Births Association and recommend that they also consider taking a Multiples class (in the city) to ensure they are able to further address those issues unique to multiple pregnancies.

30/6/2011 12:15

We don't get too many multiples but when we do we try and address their needs as best we can one on one and as part of the larger class. We have handouts we can give them and one poster showing possible presentation of multiples

27/6/2011 2:40 PM

This course is offered as a 4 week prep for childbirth course, 12 hours. and then a separate 3 hours baby care course.

25/6/2011 4:39 PM

At Peel we offer prenatal classes for a very diverse population. We do not have a specific multiples curriculum or content but would be interested in more resources about multiples. We cover the topics listed previously but not specifically related to multiples. I was not clear if all the questions were specifically related to multiples so I answered them based on the wording of the question Thanks for looking into this topic.

24/6/2011 10:11 AM

Our focus is on Breastfeeding not bottle feeding (BFI) Not sure what was meant by co-bedding??? We do not recommend bed sharing as per safe sleep recommendations but do promote room sharing.

22/6/2011 10:01 AM

NWHU recognizes the unique needs of parents of multiples and has a Multiples Prenatal Class for group or 1:1 education.

21/6/2011 8:59 AM

The Health Unit provides free classes, so I'm the only provider. We only have 265 births per year, so only 3 - 4 multiples, so the classes are targeted to singletons. However, on the rare occasions where I've had a mom with a twin pregnancy attending, I've tried to provide more specific info. I will now be able to refer them to your website!

21/6/2011 1:38 PM

Many of the topics covered in class depend on the questions received and the nature of the group. If there are parents expecting multiples, the class content is adjusted to their needs as well as those of the other parents. The course itself is not specifically designed for parents of multiples. Resources are distributed according to the needs of the parents in the class.

21/6/2011 12:32 AM

We will have full online registration available mid-July. We have volunteer guest parents come to the last class who have multiples.

21/6/2011 8:27 AM

York Region Community and Health Services will be once again offering multiple birth classes starting in 2012. These classes will be designed for the family expecting 2 or more babies. Health Connection 1-800-361-5653 can be contacted for the future details.

16/6/2011 10:03 AM

We spend 2 hours on Breastfeeding. Bottle feeding is not included, but offered on a one-on-one basis (Baby Friendly). If there are mothers of multiples in the class, we do try to include information on breastfeeding multiples especially when talking about positioning and latching.

8/6/2011 11:29 AM

We are a rural site. We do not offer prenatal education specific to multiples in a group setting. A family who is unable to attend P/N classes because of bedrest or other health / transportation/ social reasons, however, can access a home-visiting PHN for prenatal teaching.

7/6/2011 1:46 PM

Have been teaching it for over 20 years and had nearly 1,000 families come through. I love their excitement, questions, concerns and wanting to learn more.

6/6/2011 8:34 AM

We are a small, rural health region and would never have enough couples expecting multiples to make up a class. We would refer them to a larger center like Saskatoon or do some one-on-one teaching.

2/6/2011 1:51 PM

We don't have many multiples in our class, but if we do answer their questions to the best of our ability. I also refer them to your site.

31/5/2011 3:43 PM

Again, thank you for participating in this very important initiative.