

Factors Influencing Fetal Growth

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Abstract

Birth weight remains one of the most important measures we have of the health status of a population, and is a strong predictor of both neonatal mortality and morbidity. It reflects maternal nutritional status and fetal growth rates in the antenatal period. Although a large number of physiological and pathological variables can affect the growth rate, for most cases of growth-restricted fetuses a cause cannot be determined. Awareness of the physiological aspects of fetal growth is important in assessing whether the fetus is growing normally. This article is a review of recent findings and key historical material on factors influencing birth weight.

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