

Factors Influencing Fetal Growth

M Mongelli,**DM, MRCOG, FRANZCOG*

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.

Ann Acad Med Singapore 2003; 32:283-8

Key words: *Fetal growth restriction, Fetus, IUGR, Placenta*

* Associate Professor

Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology
National University of Singapore

Address for Reprints: Dr Max Mongelli, Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, National University of Singapore, 10 Kent Ridge Crescent, Singapore 119260.