



## Network Notification

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**Date:** September 8, 2011

**Number:** OH-P-2011-40  
MI-P-2011-20

**To:** Ohio & Michigan Providers

**From:** CareSource

**Subject:** Elective Labor and Delivery Prior to 39 Weeks Gestation

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CareSource supports the recent article, "Doctors to Pregnant Women: Wait at Least 39 Weeks," by National Public Radio (NPR) on elective labor and delivery prior to 39 weeks of gestation. The article specifically cites interviews from doctors in Cincinnati, Columbus and Cleveland campaigning to slow down the trend of women scheduling induction before 39 weeks.

The article shares, "A full-term pregnancy lasts 40 weeks, but elective deliveries are often planned for two or three weeks earlier. And even though 37 weeks is also still considered full term, studies show that babies born even a few weeks too early are at greater risk for health problems than those who are born later. That has some doctors campaigning to curb the trend of scheduled labor and delivery."

The article cites various reasons, including better overall outcomes, when waiting until at least 39 weeks gestation:

- The Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) may be required with a delivery that may be only 2 weeks before the due date
- Organ systems mature at different rates; therefore, some may need more time in gestation than others to mature

[Click here](#) to read the full article on this subject.