

How Are the Ratings in The Birth Survey Calculated and Other Frequently Asked Questions?

Summary:

The Birth Survey results/ratings are derived from the anonymous responses women give online at The Birth Survey website, www.thebirthsurvey.com. The Birth Survey records consumer feedback by asking women detailed questions about the care they received with specific doctors, midwives, hospitals, birth centers, and home birth services. Visit "About the Project" < <http://www.thebirthsurvey.com/AboutProject.html>> for further information and to view a demo version of the survey.

Any woman who has given birth in the US within the last three years with a licensed doctor or midwife is eligible to take The Birth Survey (TBS) once per birth. Feedback data that is 5 years old (60months) or newer is included in the publically available results/ratings. The number of ratings we have for a particular provider/facility is always provided. This helps users understand how much weight to give the ratings. Where one person's feedback is just an opinion, 50 opinions illustrates trends.

An effort is made to reduce or block repeat submissions for a single provider/facility for a unique user for a unique birth.

Women are prompted to provide the name(s) of the various doctors and/or midwives who cared for them during prenatal care, labor, and birth and postpartum in TBS. If applicable, they are also prompted to provide the name of the hospitals, or birth centers where they planned and/or actually gave birth. If their provider or facility is not listed in our user interface, she is prompted to add their name to our lists. Women answer both detailed questions and a "set of overalls" about their care with the doctor and/or midwives who provided the majority of their care. They are then asked to optionally answer the "set of overall" questions (see below) for up to three additional prenatal providers and three additional labor/birth/postpartum providers. If applicable, women are also asked detailed questions and a modified "set of overalls" about their care in a birth center or hospital.

The answers to the quality of care question "sets of overalls," are averaged across all responses and surveys to create the ratings currently available for a unique provider or facility. The "Show Details" View gives the breakdown of responses to these questions. The "national averages" reflect averages of all responses for a provider or facility category. Thus only doctor's results are averaged together, etc. The more detailed care experience data for providers and facilities will eventually become available as custom searchable results on this website.

I submitted a survey but I do not think my feedback is reflected in the results?

It is possible that your feedback is not currently reflected in the publicly viewable results for several reasons:

1. If your provider or facility's name was not in the lists provided in the survey you may have **“added” their name and contact information when you took the survey**. All doctors, midwives, hospitals, and birth centers added to our lists through TBS must have their information confirmed. We must establish correct contact information for them and ascertain that they are licensed to practice in the state of your child's birth. This is a very time-consuming process which means the feedback in your survey may be delayed. The survey data will not be added to the public results until the added provider or facility information has been confirmed. If you would like to volunteer on the committee working on confirming providers and facilities, please contact info@thebirthsurvey.com.
2. If you **gave birth more than 5 years ago** (60 months) your data has been removed from the public results. Your data is still important and will be kept in our archives but practices and procedures often change over time and data older than 5 years is deemed out-of-date.
3. If your **provider was not licensed** to practice in your state your data may be withheld from the public results.
4. If **none of these reasons** listed above apply to you, please email admin@thebirthsurvey.com. Include in the email your child's month and year of birth, your IP address (click www.whatismyip.com to determine your IP), and the providers and facilities you gave feedback about. It is possible that there is an error in our system which we may be able to resolve and thus include your feedback in the public results.

Detailed Information:

What Information Does The Birth Survey Capture ?

The survey is dynamic and adapts the questions asked based on the birth experience of each survey respondent. The survey is capable of capturing data on births in home, birth center, and hospitals; with doctors, Certified Nurse Midwives, Licensed Midwives, and anonymous providers. It also captures data on birth centers, hospitals, and home births. A set of questions is also asked if the women transferred to the hospital from an out-of-hospital birth setting. There are question sets that are specific to vaginal birth, planned cesarean section, planned repeat cesarean section, as well as unplanned cesarean sections in labor. Questions about NICU care are also included. The following topics are covered in the questions in TBS:

1. Prenatal care
2. Place of birth and provider
3. Transfers from out-of-hospital settings
4. Method of birth
5. Labor support
6. Labor care/ interventions
7. Pain management
8. Birth care/interventions
9. Informed Consent

10. After birth care
11. Circumcision
12. Feeding baby
13. Communication and interpersonal skills
14. Baby's care
15. Nursing staff
16. Environment
17. Overall ratings
18. Demographic questions
19. Survey Feedback

Women give detailed feedback about a doctor or midwife who provided the majority of their prenatal care. They are then asked to answer the “overall set” of questions for up to three additional prenatal providers (see below). She is then prompted to provide detailed feedback for the doctors and/or midwives who provided the majority of her labor and/or birth care. They are then asked again to optionally answer the “overall set” of questions for up to three additional labor, birth, or postpartum care providers. For example, a woman who had a labor provider for a home birth or birth center birth, who transported to a separate labor provider in the hospital, who then has a different doctor who performed a c-section, could give “overalls” for up to 10 separate providers. Women are also asked to give overall feedback for hospitals or birth centers who served them.

What questions constituent the quality of care “overall set?”

The results currently available reflect answers to a set of quality of care “overalls” asked in TBS. These “overalls” were built on a set of questions used in the A-CAHPS (Ambulatory Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems) from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). These overalls include a 1-5 overall rating, a question that asks if you would use the provider/facility again in the future if you were having another baby, if you would recommend the provider/facility to family and friends, and a seven item quality of care array question. A free text feedback question is also included in this overall set, but this data is not yet publicly available. See below for examples of these “overall” questions (except for the free text overall question

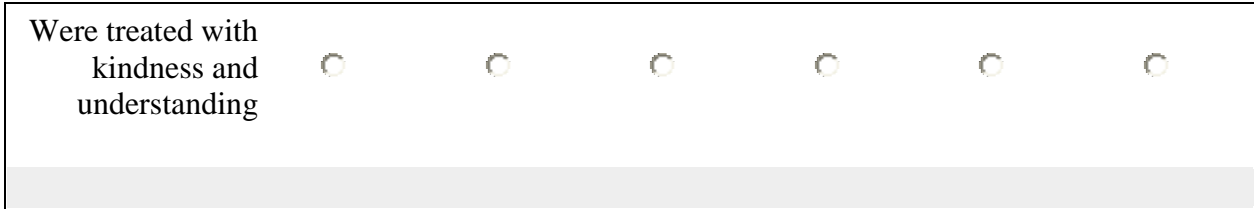
*CARE PROVIDER FOR LABOR CARE IN THE HOSPITAL:

For the next FOUR questions please think about the care provider who you chose to give comprehensive feedback about regarding your *labor* care.

1. In your opinion, how would you rate this care provider overall? (1=Worst, 5=Best)

1
 2
 3
 4
 5

*2. Would you...



Facilities are asked the first and second questions above, but not the array question. These quality of care questions are asked in regards to a hospital or birth center’s staff and will be available in the detailed reports that will eventually be available.

Results: Answers to these “sets of overalls” of quality of care questions, are averaged across all responses and surveys to create the ratings currently available for a unique provider or facility. We are careful to always include the number of surveys associated with the feedback ratings. This helps users give weight to the ratings. One person’s ratings, are opinion, whereas, 50 tend to illustrate trends in care. We do not have a requirement for a minimum number of surveys submitted to display on the site feedback for providers and facilities. We think the public is very accustomed to seeing reviews and can weigh the ratings provided.

If you are a provider or facility and you have questions about the accuracy of data, please see our FAQ section of our website < <http://www.thebirthsurvey.com/Help.html#FAQ>>.

The “Show Details” View gives the breakdown of responses to the overall set of questions. This detailed view is broken down by “prenatal care” and “labor and birth.” This distinction was chosen for two reasons. First, the experience of in-office prenatal care can be quite different from the care experienced during labor and birth. For example, a patient may find that a provider was good at respecting her care choices during prenatal appointments, but may not have been as good at respecting her choices in the midst of labor and birth. Second, we tend to have more feedback for providers for prenatal care since many women see multiple providers during their prenatal care, but often only have one or two providers during their actual labor and birth.

The “national averages” reflect averages of all responses for a provider or facility category. Thus only doctor’s national results are averaged together, only birth centers together, etc.

The more detailed care experience data women give for providers and facilities will eventually become available as custom searchable results on this website.

We have a five year moving data wall. The survey asks for the month and year of birth of the birth the woman is giving feedback about. When this birth date is older than 60 months from the current month, it is archived and removed from the publically viewable results and ratings.

Research and The Birth Survey: TBS was designed as a consumer feedback and quality improvement/customer satisfaction tool for providers and facilities. However, TBS does represent a rich dataset of women’s health care experiences. If you would like to inquire about research and TBS, please email info@thebirthsurvey.com. Created 4-20-09 by NOP