

Title: Adverse Birth Outcomes among Foreign-born vs. US-born Korean Women
Compared to Non-Hispanic White Women

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Objective: This study evaluated the risk of adverse birth outcomes among US-born and foreign-born Korean women compared to non-Hispanic white women.

Methods: The 2004 US Natality File was used for epidemiological analysis of singleton live births using a retrospective cohort design. The risks of low birth weight (LBW), preterm delivery (PTD), and Cesarean delivery (CD) among US-born Korean women (N=732) and foreign-born Korean women (N=9,784) were compared to those of non-Hispanic white women (N=21,032). Descriptive analysis examined the demographic variables. Exploratory analysis was done to assess the prenatal factors as potential confounders. Logistic regression was used to assess the relationship between the three groups and the risk of adverse birth outcomes, adjusting for the confounding variables identified in the exploratory analysis. Adjusted odds ratios (aOR) and 95% confidence intervals (95%CI) were obtained.

Results: The demographic characteristics and pregnancy-related factors of US-born Korean women were more similar to non-Hispanic white women than to foreign-born Korean women. We found that the risk of LBW was decreased by 9% among US-born Koreans (aOR=0.91, 95%CI=0.48-1.73) and 14% among foreign-born Koreans (aOR=0.86, 95%CI=0.62-1.18) compared to non-Hispanic whites, although not statistically significant. We also found that the risk of PTD was decreased by 6% (aOR=0.94, 95%CI=0.65-1.36) and 32% for US-born and foreign-born Koreans

(aOR=0.68, 95%CI=0.59-0.77), respectively. The risk of CD did not differ among the three groups.

Conclusion: US- and foreign-born Korean women were at lower risk of several adverse pregnancy outcomes. Future research should focus on identifying the cultural factors and practices associated with decreased risk of adverse birth outcomes among Korean women.

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