

# 9 Things Your OB-GYN PHYSICIAN *is afraid to tell you*



The Smart



Mother's Guide<sup>®</sup>

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TEACHING YOU HOW TO  
RECOGNIZE  
MINIMIZE & MANAGE  
PREGNANCY'S  
UNEXPECTED EVENTS

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# WHY DID I WRITE *this book?*

I am passionate about patient safety and transparency. It is essential to shed light on critical yet often overlooked issues that can significantly impact the quality of care expectant mothers receive from their OB-GYN doctors. This short informative book aims to empower patients with the knowledge they need to advocate for themselves and make informed decisions about their healthcare. It also serves as a call to action for healthcare providers to address these issues proactively.

# CHAPTER 1: STAFFING ISSUES IN LABOR AND DELIVERY SUITES

## The Problem

Unfortunately, some labor and delivery suites are short-staffed. This issue is not merely an administrative oversight; it directly impacts expectant mothers' quality of care. Short-staffing can lead to delayed responses to emergencies, less frequent monitoring, and increased stress among the existing staff, which can result in errors.

## The Impact

The risks associated with short-staffing are significant. They can range from minor inconveniences to severe medical complications for the mother and the baby. For example, inadequate staffing can lead to:

- Delayed or missed interventions increase the risk of complications like fetal distress.
- Reduced monitoring may result in overlooking signs of preeclampsia, infections, or other conditions.
- Increased stress and burnout among existing staff, leading to mistakes or oversights.

## Actionable Steps

For expectant mothers who are concerned about this issue, here are some recommendations:

- 1** Research Facilities: Research the hospital staffing ratios before choosing a healthcare provider.
- 2** Ask Questions: Ask about the staffing situation during prenatal visits.
- 3** Advocate for Yourself: Speak up if you find yourself in a short-staffed situation.
- 4** Consider a Birth Plan: Discuss your birth plan with your healthcare provider.
- 5** Seek Support: Consider hiring a doula or asking a family member to be present during labor.

By being informed and proactive, expectant mothers can mitigate some risks associated with short-staffing in labor and delivery suites.



## CHAPTER 2: THE 39-WEEK RULE

### The Problem

Some obstetricians are hesitant to deliver babies before 39 weeks, even when there are legitimate medical reasons. This hesitancy often stems from a lack of knowledge about the specific indications for early delivery, which can put both the mother and the baby at risk.

### The Impact

The reluctance to deliver before 39 weeks can lead to increased risks of stillbirths due to complications such as:

- Preeclampsia: A condition characterized by high blood pressure.
- IUGR (Intrauterine Growth Restriction): The baby doesn't grow at a standard rate.
- Fetal Macrosomia: A condition where the baby is significantly larger than average.
- Decreased Fetal Well-Being: Reduced movement or abnormal heart rates could indicate distress, requiring immediate intervention.

### Indications for Early Delivery

Understanding the indications for early delivery can help mitigate these risks. These include:

- Preeclampsia
- IUGR
- Fetal macrosomia
- Decreased fetal well-being

### Actionable Steps

For expectant mothers who are concerned about the 39-week Rule, here are some recommendations:

- 1 **Educate Yourself:** Understand the medical reasons that may necessitate an early delivery.
- 2 **Open Dialogue:** Maintain an open line of communication with your healthcare provider to discuss any concerns or symptoms you may experience.
- 3 **Second Opinion:** Don't hesitate to seek a second opinion if you're uncomfortable with your doctor's approach.
- 4 **Know Your Rights:** You have the right to be fully informed about your healthcare choices, including the timing of your delivery.
- 5 **Consult a Specialist:** If you have a high-risk pregnancy, consider consulting a maternal-fetal medicine specialist for a more nuanced approach to your care.

By being informed and proactive, expectant mothers can mitigate some risks associated with short-staffing in labor and delivery suites.

## CHAPTER 3: THE EXPERIENCE OF BLACK DOCTORS

### The Problem

Racism isn't just a societal issue; it also permeates the medical profession. Black doctors face racism in various forms, from microaggressions to overt discrimination. Racism not only affects their professional growth but also impacts the quality of healthcare they can provide.

### The Impact

The experience of racism can have several detrimental effects:

- **Emotional Toll:** The constant stress and emotional labor can lead to burnout, affecting the doctor's well-being and, by extension, their ability to care for patients.
- **Limited Opportunities:** Discrimination can limit professional opportunities, affecting career growth and resource access.
- **Patient Care:** The bias against Black doctors can lead to mistrust or underestimation of their skills, affecting patient outcomes.

### Actionable Steps

Here are some recommendations for those concerned about this issue:

- 1 Awareness and Education:** Understand the systemic problems affecting Black doctors and be an ally. Educate yourself and others to recognize and combat bias.
- 2 Support Black Doctors:** If you're a patient, choosing a Black doctor can be a way to support diversity in healthcare.
- 3 Speak Up:** If you witness discrimination, speak up. Your voice can make a difference.
- 4 Institutional Changes:** Advocate for diversity and inclusion training in medical schools and healthcare institutions.
- 5 Seek Support:** If you're a Black doctor facing these challenges, consider joining professional organizations that focus on diversity and inclusion, and don't hesitate to seek emotional support.

We can all contribute to a more equitable healthcare system by taking these steps.



## The Problem

Obesity doesn't just affect your self-esteem or mobility; it has life-threatening implications. Specifically, obesity significantly increases the risk of maternal mortality. It can exacerbate conditions like high blood pressure and diabetes, making the pregnancy high-risk and complicating the labor and delivery.

## Actionable Steps

For expectant mothers concerned about obesity, here are some

- 1** Consult a Nutritionist or Dietician: Seek professional advice to create a balanced diet plan tailored to your needs.
- 2** Use an Air Fryer: Opt for healthier cooking methods that use less oil and fat.
- 3** Watch the Fat Calories: Be mindful of the fat content in your diet and aim for healthier fats like those found in avocados and nuts.
- 4** Increase Vegetable Intake: Incorporate more vegetables into your meals for essential nutrients and fiber.
- 5** Culturally Sensitive Nutrition: Find a nutritionist or dietician who understands your cultural food preferences and can tailor a diet plan accordingly.
- 6** More Beans, Less Rice: Opt for protein-rich beans over carb-heavy rice to balance your meals.

By taking these steps, expectant mothers can significantly reduce the risks associated with obesity and ensure a healthier pregnancy and delivery.



# CHAPTER 5: THE CULTURE OF PRIVILEGE IN RESIDENCY TRAINING AND ITS IMPACT ON PATIENT CARE

## The Problem

The culture of privilege manifests in several ways:

- Call Schedules: Residents may fight over call schedules, prioritizing their convenience over patient needs.
- Work Hours: Mandatory maximum work hours can result in missed educational opportunities.
- Lack of Constructive Criticism: Some supervising attendings may hesitate to offer feedback, fearing ego fragility.

## The Impact

The culture of privilege can have several negative consequences:

- Reduced Exposure to Complex Cases: Residents may miss out on complex OB-GYN cases.
- Inadequate Training: Lack of feedback can result in unprepared residents.
- Patient Safety: Unwillingness to work extra hours can compromise safety.
- Quality of Care: Focus on convenience over patient needs can decline care quality.
- Health Disparities: Lack of exposure can perpetuate existing disparities.
- Erosion of Professional Ethics: A culture prioritizes comfort can erode ethics.

## Actionable Steps

- 1 Curriculum Review: Update curricula for comprehensive patient care.
- 2 Mentorship Programs: Focus on clinical skills and ethics.
- 3 Feedback Mechanisms: Encourage constructive criticism.
- 4 Diversity Training: Prepare residents for a diverse patient population.
- 5 Community Engagement: Expose residents to various healthcare settings.



## CHAPTER 6: ADVOCACY AND EMOTIONAL STAMINA IN HEALTHCARE

### The Problem

Despite their medical expertise, some physicians lack the emotional stamina required for effective advocacy. This deficiency manifests in several ways:

- **Insurance Battles:** Physicians may avoid battling insurance companies, leaving patients to navigate these challenges alone.
- **Inter-Departmental Advocacy:** Lack of stamina can result in poor coordination with other departments, delaying or compromising care.
- **Patient Education:** Physicians may not educate patients, missing an essential aspect of advocacy.
- **Community and Systemic Advocacy:** Some shy away from broader systemic advocacy due to emotional toll.

### The Impact

The lack of advocacy and emotional stamina can have several detrimental effects:

- **Reduced Access to Care:** Patients may miss out on necessary treatments.
- **Delayed Care:** Lack of coordination can result in delays.
- **Informed Consent:** Without education, patients can't make informed decisions.
- **Health Disparities:** The absence of systemic advocacy perpetuates existing disparities.
- **Patient Trust:** Patients may lose trust in healthcare providers.

### Actionable Steps

- 1 **Training Programs:** Implement programs focusing on emotional resilience and advocacy skills.
- 2 **Support Systems:** Establish emotional support systems like mentorship programs and mental health resources.
- 3 **Patient-Centered Care Models:** Adopt models requiring strong advocacy.
- 4 **Transparency:** Encourage open communication between physicians and patients.
- 5 **Community Partnerships:** Partner with community organizations to understand specific needs.
- 6 **Policy Advocacy:** Support physicians in policy advocacy to bring about systemic change.



# CHAPTER 7: THE ROLE OF PRIVATE EQUITY IN OB-GYN PRACTICES AND ITS IMPACT ON PATIENT CARE

## The Problem

Private equity firms are increasingly buying private OB-GYN practices. While financially stabilizing for practices, these acquisitions often come with priorities that may not align with patient well-being:

- Profit Maximization: The primary goal is to maximize profits, affecting patient care.

## The Impact

The acquisition by private equity firms can have several adverse effects:

- Quality of Care: Cost-cutting and high turnover can compromise care quality.
- Accessibility: Less profitable branches may close, reducing healthcare access.
- Affordability: Focus on high-revenue services can make healthcare less affordable.
- Doctor-patient relationship: Efficiency and profitability can strain relationships.

## Actionable Steps

- 1 Regulatory Oversight: Advocate for stronger regulations.
- 2 Transparency: Require operational and financial transparency.
- 3 Patient Education: Educate patients about the impact of private equity.
- 4 Provider Training: Train providers on navigating these challenges.
- 5 Community Engagement: Engage with community organizations.
- 6 Policy Advocacy: Encourage policy advocacy to address systemic issues.



# CHAPTER 8: THE SHIFT TO HOSPITALISTS AND LABORISTS IN OB-GYN AND ITS IMPACT ON PATIENT CARE

## *The Problem*

The shift is happening for several reasons:

- **Work-Life Balance:** Physicians seek roles with predictable schedules and emotionally healthier lifestyles.
- **Financial Stability:** Hospital employment offers stable income and reduced overhead costs.
- **Systemic Pressures:** Complexity and administrative burdens drive some towards hospital employment.

## *The Impact*

The shift can have several effects on patient care:

- **Continuity of Care:** Patients may not see the same physician throughout pregnancy, which can be unsettling.
- **Quality of Care:** Lack of a long-term relationship can result in less personalized care.
- **Accessibility:** Specialized OB-GYN care is more readily available around the clock in hospital settings.
- **Patient Education:** Focus on acute care may limit time for education and preventive healthcare.
- **Healthcare Costs:** Hospital-based care is often more expensive.



## CHAPTER 9:

# MANY OB-GYN PHYSICIANS NO LONGER WANT TO DELIVER BABIES FOR FEAR OF BEING SUED

## *The Problem*

- Many OB-GYN doctors are scared of getting sued.
- This fear is so intense that some even stop delivering babies altogether.
- A bad day for some of us could mean a life-changing event for someone else.
- We often carry the emotional weight of our patients' outcomes, which is heavy.
- According to a Medscape survey, some physicians are more likely to commit suicide than the general population.
- The stress and emotional toll can overwhelm the physician and their families because of the long hours spent away from home.

## *The Impact*

Reduced workforce of available obstetricians, especially in rural and medically underserved communities.



In conclusion, awareness regarding these issues should serve as potential warning signs within the ob-gyn specialty that could adversely affect birth outcomes.

It is important that expectant parents select the right health professional and immediately obtain a second opinion when things during the pregnancy or postpartum period are not going according to plan. A heightened awareness is a significant factor in achieving an excellent pregnancy outcome.

## REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

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