

# Impact of the Higgins Nutrition Intervention Program on birth weight: A within-mother analysis

---

**Abstract** A study was conducted to evaluate the impact of the Higgins Nutrition Intervention Program of individual nutritional assessment and rehabilitation on pregnancy outcome in a group of urban low-income women. Developed as an adjunct to routine prenatal care, the Higgins Program utilizes an individualized approach to dietary treatment that combines an assessment of the risk profile for the presenting pregnancy with the application of specific nutritional rehabilitation allowances to compensate for the negative impact of diagnosed risks. This report presents results of analyses evaluating differences in birth outcomes between 552 sibling pairs; each mother had participated in the Higgins program during the pregnancy of the second-born, but not of the first-born, member of her pair. After adjustment for parity and sex, the intervention infants weighed an average of 107 gm more than their matched siblings at birth ( $p < .01$ ). The rate of low birth weight was 50% lower among the intervention infants than among their siblings ( $p < .01$ ); rates of intra-uterine growth retardation and perinatal mortality were also lower in the intervention group. The high risk of poor pregnancy outcome in this group of urban low-income women was reduced by the Higgins program.

---

This article was published in the Journal of the American Dietetic Association, Volume 89, Agnes C. Higgins, p.dt., John E. Moxley, PhD, Paul B. Pencharz, PhD, MB, Denise Mikolanic, and Sheila Dubois, PhD, p.dt. *Impact of the Higgins Nutrition Intervention Program on birth weight: A within mother analysis*. Pages 1097-1103, Copyright Elsevier, 1989.