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Written By Scarlett Lynsky

2021 Portland, OR Cesarean Rates by Hospital

Planning a birth always means deciding where to give birth. Knowing the cesarean rate for a given birth place can be a concern and a decision-making factor in the location of birth but, frustratingly, the numbers can be hard to come by.

That's why I have crunched them for you, using data from the [State of Oregon Vital Statistics, Final method of delivery by county and facility](#). One caveat with these numbers is that since these are the numbers of where the birth *finally* took place, births that were planned for home or birth center and needed to transfer, are counted in the hospital numbers. Not all transfers to a hospital will result in a cesarean, but some will. In this way, I was not able to determine a cesarean rate for the home births or birth center births because a cesarean cannot take place AT the birth center or at home.

Even with that said, I definitely thought there were some surprises in here. **Legacy Emanuel Medical Center has by far the highest cesarean rate at a whopping 38%.** Now, they do have the highest level of NICU (level 4, OHSU also has a level 4 NICU). NICU level can draw higher risk pregnancies, which can also lead to a higher percentage of cesarean births. Perhaps Emanuel gets more of the home birth/birth center transfers, but I'm not sure if that can truly account for this high of a cesarean rate. Emanuel, if you have someone who can speak to this (with numbers, of course, please let me know!

1. **OHSU's cesarean rate is 5 percentage points lower than Emanuel's, while also having a Children's Hospital and the same high level NICU (level 4).**

2021 Portland Metro (Tri-County) Cesarean Rates by Hospital (Final)

| Location | County | Total Births | Cesarean Rate | Total VBAC Births | Percentage of VBAC Births* | NICU Level |
|---|------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|----------------------------|------------|
| Legacy Emanuel Medical Center | Multnomah | 1727 | 38% | 75 | 4.3% | IV |
| Providence St. Vincent Medical Center | Washington | 3515 | 33% | 101 | 2.9% | III |
| Providence Portland Medical Center | Multnomah | 2525 | 33% | 69 | 2.7% | III |
| Legacy Meridian Park Medical Center | Clackamas | 971 | 33% | 22 | 2.3% | I |
| OHSU Hospitals & Clinics | Multnomah | 2501 | 32% | 100 | 4.0% | IV |
| Hillsboro Medical Center (formerly Tuality) | Washington | 600 | 32% | 33 | 5.5% | II |
| Adventist Medical Center | Multnomah | 497 | 31% | 16 | 3.2% | I |
| Legacy Good Samaritan Medical Center | Multnomah | 942 | 30% | 9 | .9% | I |
| Legacy Mount Hood Medical Center | Multnomah | 782 | 27% | 26 | 3.3% | I |
| Kaiser Sunnyside Medical Center | Clackamas | 2330 | 26% | 45 | 1.9% | III |
| Providence Willamette Falls Medical Center | Clackamas | 754 | 24% | 21 | 2.8% | I |
| Kaiser Foundation Hospital - Westside | Washington | 1613 | 22% | 34 | 2.1% | I |

Source: State of Oregon Vital Statistics, Final method of delivery by county and facility
Oregon occurrence births:

<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/BIRTHDEATHCERTIFICATES/VITALSTATISTICS/BIRTH/Documents/2021/facilcesarean21.pdf>

Of note:

- 1) These data only include the final location of the birth. Therefore, cesarean births that occur because of a transport from home or birth center are counted in the hospitals cesarean rate.
- 2) Since the State of Oregon does not report how many births involve people who have had a previous cesarean, I cannot accurately determine the VBAC rate, only how many VBACs a hospital supports as a proportion of their total number of births.

2. **Kaiser Sunnyside has a level III NICU, but maintained a much lower cesarean rate, 26%, than its fellow level III NICU hospitals.**

Providence St. Vincent and Providence Portland also have level III NICUs, but 33% cesarean rates (7 percentage points higher than Kaiser Sunnyside).

3. **Kaiser Westside had the absolute lowest hospital cesarean rate in the area at 22%.**

4. Hillsboro Medical Center (formerly Tuality Hospital) had the highest percentage of Vaginal Births After Cesarean (VBAC) as a fraction of their overall births, but OHSU and Providence St. Vincent were nearly tied in the absolute number of VBACs that happened at their facilities.

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