



Extremely Premature Infants Still Unlikely to Survive

A précis by Women's Health Victoria

In 2007, the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee (UK) highlighted the lack of published peer reviewed data regarding the survival of infants born at 23 and 24 weeks gestation in the UK.

A recent study in the UK addressed the aforementioned gap and looked at survival of infants alive at the onset of labour and their survival to discharge home.¹

It compared the survival of infants born before 26 weeks gestation in 1994-9 to 2000-5.

Findings included:

- of infants born at 22 weeks, none survived
- intensive care for infants born at 22 weeks remains unsuccessful
- of infants born at 23 weeks, 81% did not survive
- despite advancements in neonatal intensive care, rates of survival for infants born at 22 and 23 weeks remain unchanged

¹ Field, DJ, Dorling JS, Manketlow, BN & Draper, ES 2008, 'Survival of extremely premature babies in a geographically defined population: prospective cohort study of 1994-9 compared with 2000-5', viewed 12 May 2008, *BMJ Online First*, doi:10.1136/bmj.39555.670718.BE, <http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/bmj.39555.670718.BE>