



# Multifetal Reduction

*Maternal and Infant Care Center*

**Couples or individuals thinking about multifetal reduction face a serious and difficult decision. Our caring staff can help you understand the potential concerns for your pregnancy and the medical benefits and risks of the procedure in your case. We will only present information and recommendations in your case – the decision is yours to make.**

## **A Highly Personal and Private Decision**

You may have recently been surprised to find that you have a pregnancy with multiples. Many patients accept or even welcome the potential of a twin pregnancy. For some patients, a pregnancy complicated by triplets or more may represent overwhelming medical, emotional and financial challenges. This can be a confusing time as your care provider may have introduced to you the concept of multifetal reduction.

The Maternal and Infant Care Clinic at University of Washington Medical Center (UWMC) has a team of *perinatologists* (high-risk obstetrics doctors) who provide counseling for families thinking about multifetal reduction as well as perform the procedure. Multifetal reduction is an elective medical procedure. It is performed early in pregnancy after the diagnosis of a multiple gestation. If a couple or individual is thinking about or has decided to proceed with multifetal reduction, a thorough ultrasound is done to check each fetus for possible early detectable birth defects or other problems. The reduction procedure then involves an ultrasound-guided injection of potassium chloride into the heart of one or more of the fetuses. The injection stops the heart of the fetus. The fetal tissue is usually reabsorbed into the woman's body.

Multifetal reduction is a highly personal and private matter. The decision requires accurate medical information as well as time to think over feelings and values related to this emotional dilemma.

At UWMC we believe our role is to provide information and to support the choices made by our patients in this difficult decision.

**To schedule an appointment:**

Please call with any questions or to schedule an appointment with one of our perinatologists.

Maternal and Infant Care Clinic:  
206-598-4070

## Multifetal Reduction Commonly Asked Questions

### *How early can multifetal reduction be done?*

The procedure is most often performed between 10 and 12 weeks of gestation, counted from the start of your last period. Two visits are usually involved. The first is a consultation with one of UWMC's perinatologists to discuss the medical risks and benefits in your pregnancy. The second appointment, if you desire to go ahead with the procedure, is scheduled anywhere from the same day to a week later.

### *Is multifetal reduction safe?*

Worldwide literature suggests that 10% of reduced pregnancies are lost before 22 weeks, compared with a loss rate of 8% for unreduced triplet pregnancies. Pregnancies reduced from triplets to twins that continue past 22 weeks have a similar outcome as pregnancies that began with twins.

### *Who does the procedure?*

At UWMC, we have perinatologists who perform multifetal reduction.

### *How much does it cost?*

The cost of the procedure is usually covered by your insurance provider. Contact your insurance carrier directly to ask coverage questions.

### *How do I schedule a consultation?*

Your care provider can make the initial contact with the nursing staff at the Maternal and Infant Care Clinic (MICC) to schedule your consultation or you can call us directly. A nurse will then contact you to schedule your first appointment with a perinatologist and to discuss any concerns or questions you may have.

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