

News Statement

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Covenant Health has issued following statement regarding birth methods at
Covenant Women's and Children's**

At Covenant Women's and Children's, we are continually striving to provide for the health of our communities and improve the quality of care in our West Texas/eastern New Mexico communities. We believe that transparency and accountability are central to fulfilling that mission, and we voluntarily submit information to Leapfrog Group and other organizations.

In all cases, our goal is to empower our patients to make informed decisions regarding their available options. Our obstetrical patients consistently give their doctors and health care team high scores in patient satisfaction surveys compared with their peers across the nation.

There are many factors that contribute to rates of cesarean section at Covenant Women's and Children's, including a large and diverse West Texas service area. Additionally, while rising rates of birth by cesarean section reflect upward trends at hospitals throughout Texas and nationwide, Covenant Women's and Children's has made significant progress in recent years: In 2015 our C-section rate declined to about 35% for both high and low-risk births. Still, we know this is an area where we can continue to improve. We've taken many steps to help us reduce our C-section rate further, including asking the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) to help us review our practices earlier this year.

Dr. Amy Thompson, CEO of Covenant Women's and Children's:

“Our highest priority is to provide safe, high quality care that is compassionate to our patients and their families. With leading-edge obstetrics, maternal fetal medicine, neonatal intensive care specialists and our caring staff, Covenant leads the way with specialized care for women and we work every day to provide education with our patients while balancing what is best for mothers and families to ensure a safe delivery of their baby.”

BACKGROUND:

- Birthing method numbers are submitted voluntarily by Covenant Health to Leapfrog Group and other organizations. Many large hospitals do not report C-section rates at all.
- Covenant Health reports all C-section numbers, not only high- or low-risk instances.
- C-section rates fell to 35 percent in 2015 from 42 percent as cited in Consumer Reports.
- Covenant Women's and Children's is continuing to use input from ACOG and our own reviews to improve our care and further reduce C-section rates.

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About Covenant Health:

Covenant Health has served for almost 100 years as the only faith-based integrated health network in the West Texas, eastern New Mexico region providing a Christian healing ministry. Covenant's network includes six hospitals, more than 1,000 licensed beds, more than 5,000 employees, 97 primary care providers, a medical staff of more than 600 physicians at its cornerstone facilities, and a regionally based health plan – FirstCare -- offering high-quality affordable healthcare coverage. To learn more about Covenant Health, please visit covenanthealth.org. You can find Covenant Health news and story ideas in the [Covenant Newsroom](#), on [Facebook](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#).