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Predicting preterm birth: A tool that can reduce rates globally

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Preterm birth is defined by birth that takes place before the completion of 37 weeks of gestation. It is estimated that over 15 million babies are born preterm annually. Globally, preterm birth is one of the leading causes of death for children under the age of five with an estimated of one million preterm birth-related mortalities. Many of the survivors face a lifetime of challenging disabilities which include learning disabilities and visual and hearing problems. Although neonatology advances in the past decades has increased survival rates for preterm birth, above 20% of preterm neonates will suffer at least one major disability including chronic lung disease, impaired mental development, cerebral palsy, deafness or blindness. There is a significant need to identify pregnant women who are at risk of preterm birth. In the current paradigms, treatment for high-risk pregnancies involves prophylactic treatment or enhanced surveillance or close monitoring of the pregnancy, which reduces preterm birth rates. However, in most cases, classification of pregnancies as high-risk is attributed to prior medical history or clinical examinations, identifying only a small subsection of the true high-risk pregnancies prone to preterm birth. Still, the majority of pregnancies that are prone to preterm births are not identified at early stages and hence early medical intervention for such cases is not possible. Carmentix has developed a test based on proprietary biomarkers that will determine women at risk early in the pregnancy allowing clinicians to take prophylactic action. Carmentix test will not only predict risk but guide clinicians towards the best course of treatment that may improve outcome well beyond the limitations that are to date.

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