When mothers use illicit or prescription drugs during the pregnancy, infants can present with drug withdrawal symptoms after birth, called neonatal withdrawal syndrome (NWS).

The risk for NWS is greatest when the mother uses prescription pain relievers known as opioids analgesics or heroin during the pregnancy.\(^1,2\)

Between 2000 and 2009, there were a total of 1,509 infants in Michigan hospitalized with a diagnosis of NWS*.

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* NWS was identified using the ICD-9-CM diagnosis code 779.5

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The rate of NWS among Michigan infants increased from 41.2 to 289.0 per 100,000 live births from 2000 to 2009, representing a 601% increase (Figure 1).

Rates of NWS between 2000 and 2009 varied by county (Figure 2). The highest county rates were in northern portion of the Lower Peninsula and the Upper Peninsula.

NWS infants have longer hospital stays, which cost over $35 million between 2000 and 2009.\(^3\)

References: