We estimate the marginal impact of prenatal care on birth outcomes using a nationally representative data on about 14 million births in Mexico. Given the self-selection into prenatal care, we identify the causal impact of prenatal care on birth outcomes by estimating an instrumental variable model. We find positive impacts of increased prenatal visits on birthweight, length, and APGAR score of the newborn. The impacts of prenatal care on birth outcomes differ by mother’s education, municipality’s development level, and birthweight distribution. We find suggestive evidence that prenatal visit affects birth outcomes through reduction in pre-term births.

Keywords: Prenatal care; Birthweight; Birth outcomes; Mexico
JEL Codes: I10, I12, J13, J18