Using fetal fibronectin to diagnose pre-term labour: the role of rapid fetal fibronectin assay in the management of spontaneous preterm labour

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**Record Status**
This is a bibliographic record of a published health technology assessment from a member of INAHTA. No evaluation of the quality of this assessment has been made for the HTA database.

**Citation**

**Authors' objectives**
To evaluate the added value of using the Rapid fFN for the TL™ System (referred to here as the rapid fFN assay) to diagnose PTL in symptomatic women, which is the only fFN detection modality currently available in Canada and the United States for this indication.

**Authors' conclusions**
The absence of fFN in the cervicovaginal secretion of tested women with signs and symptoms of PTL has been shown to be a powerful predictor of the absence of progressive delivery within the next 1 to 2 weeks. The clinical importance of a positive test result remains unclear. Knowledge of a negative rapid fFN assay result may supplement clinical judgment to diagnose PTL and predict low imminent risk of PTD/PTB in the short term with more accuracy than clinical criteria alone. However, the hypothesis that its use will inevitably improve patient outcomes and reduce healthcare resource usage and the associated costs remains to be proven. The challenge remains in the initial and ongoing education of the clinical and laboratory staff regarding the rapid fFN assay. As the rapid fFN assay becomes widely available in Canada, institutional guidelines for testing and regular audits of its use will assist in defining its appropriate use and interpretation of the results.

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