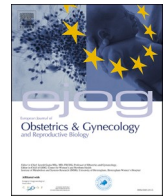




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Review article

Reproductive outcomes after surgical correction of congenital obstructive genital tract anomalies: A systematic review and quantitative pooled analysis of published data

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ABSTRACT

Background: Congenital obstructive genital tract anomalies are rare but clinically significant causes of menstrual outflow obstruction, endometriosis, and subfertility. Surgical correction aims to restore reproductive potential, yet evidence to guide counselling on fertility and pregnancy outcomes remains fragmented.

Objective: To synthesise and pool published data on fertility, obstetric, and neonatal outcomes following surgical correction of congenital obstructive anomalies, comparing outcomes across anomaly types to inform individualised counselling.

Study design: A systematic review was conducted. PubMed, Emcare, CINAHL, and Scopus were searched from inception to May 2025. Studies reporting reproductive outcomes after surgical correction of imperforate hymen, transverse vaginal septum, OHVIRA-spectrum, functional non-communicating uterine horns, or cervicovaginal atresia were included. Data were extracted independently and pooled by anomaly type. Study quality was assessed using Joanna Briggs Institute tools.

Results: Ninety-six studies (41 case reports, 41 case series, and 14 retrospective cohorts) were contributed 634 fertility-related events. Infertility rates were low following imperforate hymen (8.0%) and OHVIRA-spectrum anomalies (18.2%), intermediate in functional rudimentary horns (21.2%), and high following transverse vaginal septum (52.6%) and cervicovaginal atresia (55.4%). Among achieved pregnancies, livebirth rates exceeded 80%. Preterm birth occurred in 23.7% of pregnancies and did not differ significantly by anomaly type. Caesarean delivery was frequent (55.9%), particularly after cervicovaginal reconstruction (97.6%). Birthweight was lower following cervicovaginal atresia repair, with higher rates of small-for-gestational-age infants. Gestational hypertensive disorders were associated with co-existing renal agenesis.

Conclusion: Reproductive outcomes after surgical correction are generally favourable but vary substantially by anomaly type. These findings support individualised counselling and targeted antenatal surveillance.

Introduction

Obstructive reproductive tract anomalies are congenital malformations that block menstrual outflow, leading to hematometra or hemato-colpos and often retrograde menstruation with endometriosis [1,2]. They typically present at puberty with primary amenorrhea, cyclical pain, or dysmenorrhea depending on the level of obstruction [3]. Surgical correction aims to restore patency and preserve fertility, with postoperative complications such as restenosis or adhesions being uncommon but occasionally requiring revision, particularly after cervical or upper-vaginal reconstruction [4].

The spectrum of obstruction ranges from distal anomalies such as imperforate hymen and transverse vaginal septum, where the uterus and cervix are normal, to complex forms involving uterine duplication or fusion defects, including Obstructed Hemivagina with Ipsilateral Renal Agenesis (OHVIRA) and non-communicating functional uterine horns³. Other variants, such as cervicovaginal atresia, require complex reconstructive surgery with risks of stenosis, cervical insufficiency, and potential obstetric complications related to breaching the myometrium during repair [5,6]. Although their embryologic origins differ—some arising from the urogenital sinus and others from Müllerian duct anomalies—they converge clinically as causes of menstrual outflow

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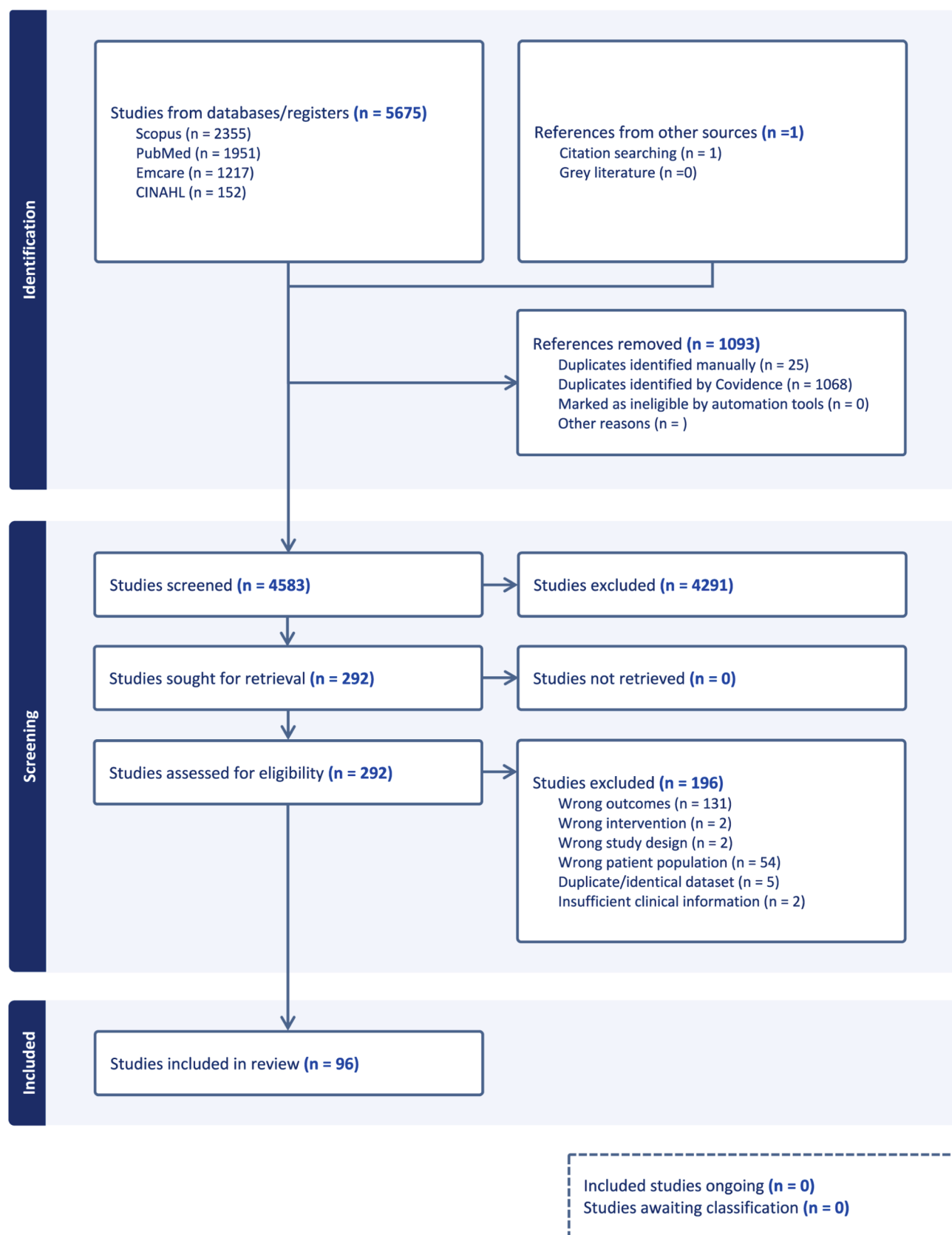


Fig. 1. PRISMA flow diagram of study selection.

obstruction, sharing the surgical goal of restoring drainage and preserving fertility [7].

Because these anomalies are rare and heterogeneous, most evidence comes from small case series with variable outcome reporting, limiting evidence-based counselling on fertility and pregnancy outcomes [4]. Examining them collectively offers a framework to understand how the level and nature of obstruction influence reproductive prognosis. Our goal was not to merge distinct entities, but to enable comparison between them, highlighting the unique reproductive implications of each anomaly. Accordingly, outcomes are presented stratified by anomaly subtype rather than as a single unified prognosis. This approach provides clinicians a single, accessible reference for counselling and follow-up, while outlining where prognoses diverge by anomaly type.

Existing reviews have largely focused on diagnostic and operative aspects, with limited reporting of reproductive outcomes. Fertility data are typically presented narratively or limited to overall pregnancy or livebirth rates, providing little insight into conception method, obstetric complications, or neonatal outcomes [8]. The scope of reproductive outcome reporting has varied: reviews of imperforate hymen and transverse vaginal septum [9,10] omitted reproductive outcomes entirely, one OHVIRA review [11] described these outcomes narratively, and another pooled limited data across 67 pregnancies [12]. Other work has examined non-obstructive but related variants, such as complete uterine septum with double cervix and vaginal septum [13], which fall outside the scope of this review.

The most comprehensive synthesis of congenital cervical malformations to date, by Mikos et al. [8], pooled data from 27 viable pregnancies, reporting aggregated pregnancy and livebirth rates but no further obstetric detail. While their *meta-analysis* offered valuable evidence of fertility potential, outcomes such as use of assisted conception, miscarriage, preterm birth, mode of delivery, and neonatal parameters remain undefined.

The present review builds on this foundation by systematically collating and quantitatively analysing reproductive outcomes across obstructive genital tract anomalies. By integrating detailed fertility and obstetric data, it aims to clarify reproductive prognosis after surgical correction and to inform both patient counselling and long-term management strategies.

Materials and methods

Protocol and registration

This systematic review was conducted in accordance with the *Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses* (PRISMA) 2020 guidelines. The review protocol was prospectively registered with PROSPERO (registration number: CRD420251179088 and is available online (<https://www.crd.york.ac.uk/PROSPERO/view/CRD420251179088>)).

Eligibility criteria

Eligible studies included women of any age with a surgically corrected obstructive reproductive tract anomaly, defined as any congenital malformation causing partial or complete menstrual outflow obstruction. Anomalies considered included imperforate hymen, transverse vaginal septum, OHVIRA spectrum, distal vaginal or cervicovaginal atresia, obstructed uterine septum, and functional non-communicating uterine horn.

Studies were required to report at least one reproductive outcome following definitive surgical correction, including conception or infertility, miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy, preterm birth, livebirth, stillbirth, mode of birth, malpresentation, postpartum haemorrhage, or pregnancy-related hypertensive disorder. Detailed inclusion and exclusion criteria are outline in [Appendix 1](#).

Exclusion criteria were:

- Studies limited to non-obstructive anomalies (e.g. septate or bicornuate uterus without obstruction)
- Reports describing pregnancies occurring *prior* to surgical correction
- Studies reporting only surgical or anatomical outcomes without reproductive data

No date or language restrictions were applied. Artificial intelligence translation (ChatGPT 5.1) was used to translate articles published in languages other than English.

Information sources and search strategy

A comprehensive search was performed in PubMed, Emcare, CINAHL, and Scopus from inception to May 2025. Each database was searched independently by two reviewers (CG and MB) using terms related to obstructive reproductive tract anomalies, surgical correction, and reproductive outcomes. Full search strategies are provided in [Appendix 2](#).

Reference lists of included articles were screened manually using a backward citation snowballing approach to identify additional eligible studies. All identified records were imported into Covidence, and duplicates were removed before screening.

Study selection

Titles and abstracts were independently screened by two reviewers (CG and MB) using Covidence. Full-text articles were retrieved for all potentially eligible studies and assessed against predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Disagreements were resolved by consensus and discussion with a senior reviewer (ND). The study selection process is summarised in the PRISMA flow diagram ([Fig. 1](#)).

Data extraction

Two reviewers (ND and CG) independently extracted data using a standardised form developed a priori. Extracted variables included: study characteristics (author, year, country, design, sample size), type of obstructive anomaly, associated anomalies, surgical approach, maternal age, use of assisted reproductive technology (ART), fertility outcomes (number attempting conception, number conceived, number infertile), and pregnancy outcomes (livebirth, miscarriage, preterm birth, birthweight, malpresentation, mode of delivery, hypertensive disorders). Reported terminations of pregnancy were excluded. For papers that combine pre- and post-repair outcomes¹⁴, only post-repair conceptions were included.

Where multiple papers appeared to describe overlapping cohorts, only the most complete or recent dataset was retained. Earlier or partial reports were excluded as duplicate datasets¹⁵⁻¹⁹. Authors were contacted when clarification or additional data were required.

Risk-of-bias assessment

Risk of bias and reporting quality were assessed by a single reviewer (ND) using the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) critical appraisal tools for case reports, case series, and cohort studies, according to study design²⁰. The tools were applied to evaluate the appropriateness and completeness of reporting within each study rather than experimental rigor.

Data synthesis and analysis

Individual study results were tabulated by anomaly type and synthesised descriptively using summary tables. Fertility outcomes were analysed per woman attempting conception, and pregnancy outcomes per pregnancy. Infertility was defined as failure to conceive within ≥ 12

Table 1
Characteristics of included studies.

Characteristic	Values	n (%) of studies
Publication period	≤1980	3 (3.1%)
	1981–1990	6 (6.3%)
	1991–2000	12 (12.5%)
	2001–2010	18 (18.8%)
	2011–2020	34 (35.4%)
	2021–2025	23 (24.0%)
Continent/region of origin	Africa	1 (1.0%)
	Asia	34 (35.4%)
	Europe	32 (33.3%)
	Middle East	16 (16.7%)
	North America	10 (10.4%)
	Oceania	1 (1.0%)
	South America	2 (2.1%)
	Case report	41 (42.7%)
Study design	Case series	41 (42.7%)
	Retrospective cohort	14 (14.6%)
Sample size	Median 5 (range 1–170)	
Mean follow-up duration (years)	5.7 ± 5.9 (range 0.25–36)	
Risk-of-bias summary	Study type	Median JBI score (IQR)^a
	Case reports	8 (8–8)
	Case series	9 (9–9)
	Retrospective cohorts	9 (8–9)

JBI, Joanna Briggs Institute; IQR, interquartile range.

^a Methodological quality was assessed using the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) critical appraisal tools appropriate to study design; higher scores indicate lower methodological quality. JBI checklists comprised 8 items for case reports, 10 items for case series, and 11 items for retrospective cohort studies.

months after surgical correction, excluding those who did not attempt or desire conception, or who had pre-existing subfertility but conceived within 12 months post-repair.

Descriptive pooled proportions were calculated for each outcome using aggregated counts from the included studies.

Statistical analyses were performed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 29. Continuous variables were assessed for normality using visual inspection of histograms and the Shapiro–Wilk test. Normally distributed data are presented as mean ± standard deviation, whereas non-normally

distributed data are reported as median with interquartile range (IQR). Categorical outcomes were compared using the Chi-square test, and continuous non-normally distributed variables (e.g. birth weight) were compared using the Mann–Whitney *U* test. Logistic regression was used to explore predictors of hypertensive disorders of pregnancy, adjusting for maternal age, ART use, and anomaly subtype. Missing data were treated as “not reported” rather than assumed absence.

To assess the robustness of pooled pregnancy outcomes, a sensitivity analysis was planned excluding studies that included fewer than four participants. Single case reports and very small case series (≤3 women) were excluded from quantitative analyses of fertility outcomes, including denominators for women attempting conception and those infertile after surgical correction. These reports were retained only for the descriptive synthesis of pregnancy outcomes, as they are strongly subject to publication bias toward successful conceptions and rarely include information on attempts to conceive or duration of follow-up.

Ethical considerations

Ethics approval was not required as all data were obtained from previously published studies without individual patient identifiers.

Results

Study selection and characteristics

A total of 292 full-text articles were assessed for eligibility, of which 96 met inclusion criteria for quantitative synthesis (Fig. 1) [6,13–109]. Backward citation searching was undertaken for all included full-text articles. Manual screening of these titles identified one additional case report that met inclusion criteria and was retrieved via library request [110]. No further eligible studies were found.

Included studies comprised 41 single-case reports, 41 case series, and 14 retrospective cohort studies published between 1953–2025. The dataset encompassed a broad geographic distribution, with most studies from Asia, Europe, and the Middle East, and smaller cohorts reported from other regions. Most were single-centre case series or case reports, reflecting the rarity of obstructive Müllerian anomalies and the lack of

Table 2
Fertility outcomes after surgical correction of obstructive genital tract anomalies.

Anatomical variant/obstruction	No. of studies (fertility outcomes) ^a	Total women (n)	Women attempting conception (n) ^b	Infertile n (%)	Any ART use among fertility events n (%) ^c	Endometriosis n (%) ^d	Notes/fertility context
Imperforate hymen	3	89	26	2 (8.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	Normal reproductive anatomy once corrected; fertility essentially normal.
Transverse vaginal septum	2	49	19	10 (52.6%)	2 (3.8%)	11 (37.9%)	Lower fertility; high or thick septa prone to restenosis or malalignment. Limited data available only.
OHVIRA spectrum ^e	13	475	176	32 (18.2%)	8 (4.0%)	34 (17.6%)	Fertility generally restored after septal excision.
Rudimentary horn (functional) ^f	5	271	66	14 (21.2%)	14 (11.8%)	10 (58.8%)	Fertility arises from the contralateral functioning uterus once the obstructed horn is removed; good postoperative reproductive potential.
Cervicovaginal atresia ^g	12	240	56	31 (55.4%)	15 (23.4%)	17 (51.5%)	Fertility remained low even after reconstruction or ART; true infertility may be underestimated as women who underwent hysterectomy were not counted among those attempting conception.

^a Study counts apply to fertility outcomes; ART and endometriosis were summarised using available event-level data.

^b Totals reflect pooled counts across all studies contributing fertility data within each anomaly type.

^c ART = Assisted Reproductive Technology (IVF, ICSI, or similar). ART use was analysed at the fertility-event level (pregnancy or infertility events), rather than per individual woman. Percentages represent the proportion of fertility events involving ART. ART data were available for 504 of 634 fertility events (79.5%).

^d Endometriosis data were available for 359 of 634 events (56.6%).

^e “OHVIRA spectrum” (Obstructed Hemivagina and Ipsilateral Renal Agenesis) includes uterus didelphys or bicorporeal variants with an obstructed hemivagina and ipsilateral renal anomaly.

^f “Rudimentary horn (functional)” refers to a unicornuate uterus with a functioning, non-communicating horn.

^g “Cervicovaginal atresia” includes any atresia involving the cervix and/or vagina. Some studies included a majority of participants with cervical atresia but included women with vaginal atresia and normal cervix, these data could not be extracted separately.

Table 3

Pregnancy and reproductive outcomes after surgical correction of obstructive reproductive tract anomalies.

Anatomical variant/obstruction	No. studies (n)	Livebirths n (%) ^a	Miscarriages n (%) ^b	Preterm birth n (%) ^c	Median gestation (weeks)	Caesarean n (%) ^d	Hypertensive disorder n (%) ^e	Renal anomaly n (%) ^f	Reported median (IQR) birthweight (g) ^h
Imperforate hymen	5	101 (97.1%)	3 (2.9%)	12 (11.9%)	38	21 (23.1%)	3 (4.3%)	0 (0.0%)	2867 (2867–2867)
Transverse vaginal septum	11	31 (72.1%)	11 (25.6%)	8 (25.8%)	32	10 (41.7%)	1 (3.8%)	13 (30.2%)	3382 (2779–3765)
OHVIRA spectrum	30	217 (69.8%)	54 (19.4%)	57 (26.9%)	37	137 (63.7%)	10 (6.4%)	307 (98.7%)	3010 (2645–3050)
Functional rudimentary horn	16	91 (83.5%)	17 (15.6%)	26 (28.3%)	37	48 (52.7%)	19 (21.8%)	35 (34.7%)	3145 (–)
Obstructed uterine hemicavity	4	4 (80.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (25.0%)	36	4 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3175 (–)
Vaginal atresia	7	5 (83.3%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (40.0%)	36	3 (60.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (20.0%)	3062 (–)
Cervicovaginal atresia	27	42 (75.0%)	10 (17.9%)	8 (21.6%)	37	41 (97.6%)	1 (3.2%)	2 (3.8%)	2400 (2350–3000)
Overall	100 ⁱ	491/596 (82.4%)	95/602 (15.8%)	114/482 (23.7%)	37	264/472 (55.9%)	34/379 (9.0%)	358/622 (57.6%)	2867 (2710–3145)

IQR, interquartile range; OHVIRA, obstructed hemivagina and ipsilateral renal agenesis.

^a Cerclage data available for 411 of 528 applicable pregnancies. Women with cervicovaginal atresia significantly more likely to undergo cervical cerclage than other obstructive anomalies.^b Endometriosis data were available for 359 of 634 pregnancies (56.6%).^c Livebirth outcomes reported for 596 of 634 pregnancies (94%); missing data comprised 32 pregnancies from Tong et al. 2013 and seven ongoing pregnancies.^d Miscarriage outcomes reported for 602 of 634 pregnancies (95%); missing data comprised 32 pregnancies from Tong et al. 2013.^e Preterm-birth outcomes were applicable to 528 pregnancies (excluding miscarriages, ectopics, and ongoing pregnancies, but including livebirths and stillbirths). Gestational-age data were reported for 482/528 pregnancies (91.2%), with missing data limited to Tong et al. (2013; n = 32) and three smaller studies (n = 6, 2, and 6). Percentages for preterm birth were therefore calculated from the 482 pregnancies with reported gestational age.^f Mode of birth outcomes were applicable to 528 pregnancies (excluding miscarriages, ectopics, and ongoing pregnancies, but including livebirths and stillbirths). Gestational-age data were reported for 472/528 pregnancies (89.4%), with missing data limited to Tong et al. (2013; n = 32) and five smaller studies (n = 17, 1, 1, 3 and 2). Percentages for preterm birth were therefore calculated from the 472 pregnancies with reported gestational age.^g Hypertensive disorders of pregnancy (including gestational hypertension and pre-eclampsia) were reported in only a subset of studies and were not a primary outcome in most. As such, data completeness was limited (reported for 379 of 528 pregnancies to which this outcome was applicable, 71.8%). Missing data were treated as 'not reported' rather than assumed absence of disease.^h Renal anomaly data were available for 622 of 634 pregnancies (98%); 12 cases were not specified in the source publications.ⁱ Birthweight was non-normally distributed for several anomaly types; therefore, median (IQR) values are presented for all groups. Birthweight data were inconsistently reported (available for ≈ 220/635 pregnancies). When reported, data were often aggregated per study and rounded. In some anomaly groups, the 75th percentile could not be calculated owing to ≤2 cases, resulting in apparent IQR = median values. In these instances, medians are presented without an IQR (shown as '–'). Values therefore represent reported medians or single study means where available and should be interpreted with caution.^j Because some studies reported multiple anomaly types, totals exceed 96.

prospective cohort data. Risk-of-bias assessment using the JBI critical appraisal tools indicated generally good quality of reporting across included studies, particularly for descriptive clarity and case detail. However, as most evidence comprised case reports and small series, the findings remain vulnerable to publication bias toward positive or successful outcomes. A summary of study characteristics is provided in [Table 1](#), and detailed characteristics of individual studies are provided in [Supplementary Table 1](#).

Fertility outcomes

Fertility outcomes varied substantially according to anomaly type ([Table 2](#)). Across studies reporting fertility outcomes [3,6,14,29,31–33,43,45,48,50,51,53,55,58,59,62,63,66,68,70,73,74,76–78,81,83,85–89,93,95,97,99,103–106,109,111], the proportion of women attempting conception ranged from 26 in imperforate hymen to 176 in OHVIRA-spectrum anomalies. Infertility was uncommon after correction of imperforate hymen (2/26, 8.0%) and remained relatively low for OHVIRA-spectrum anomalies (32/176, 18.2%) and functional rudimentary horns (14/66, 21.2%). In contrast, infertility was common among women with transverse vaginal septum (10/19, 52.6%) and cervicovaginal atresia (31/56, 55.4%), despite surgical reconstruction.

Use of assisted reproductive technology (ART) was uncommon in anomalies with preserved uterine anatomy but increased with anomaly complexity. ART use was summarised at the fertility-event level (pregnancy or infertility events), rather than per individual woman. Percentages therefore represent the proportion of fertility events involving ART, not the proportion of women attempting conception. ART use was

rare following imperforate hymen repair and transverse vaginal septum but occurred more frequently in functional rudimentary horns and cervicovaginal atresia, reflecting greater baseline infertility and reliance on assisted conception in these groups.

Endometriosis was variably reported across studies and was more prevalent in complex obstructive anomalies. Endometriosis data were available for 359 of 634 events (56.6%), primarily from aggregate study-level reporting, limiting precise prevalence estimates. Reported proportions therefore reflect available event-level data rather than true prevalence among all women. Higher proportions of endometriosis were observed in functional rudimentary horns and cervicovaginal atresia, consistent with prolonged obstruction and retrograde menstruation.

Pregnancy and obstetric outcomes

Pregnancy outcomes for all reported post-surgical pregnancies (n = 634) are summarised in [Table 3](#). Once pregnancy was achieved, outcomes were generally favourable across anomaly groups. Overall live-birth rates exceeded 80%, with the highest proportions following repair of lower-tract anomalies such as imperforate hymen, and somewhat lower, but still favourable, rates among duplication and atresia groups.

Preterm birth occurred in 23.7%, and did not differ significantly between anomaly types among pregnancies with reported gestational age ($\chi^2 = 10.97$, df = 6, $p = 0.09$), although the proportion was lower in imperforate hymen than in other categories. Cervical cerclage was performed in 3.9% of ongoing pregnancies and was significantly more frequent (15.8%) among women with cervicovaginal atresia ($p = 0.002$), consistent with the need for structural support after cervical

reconstruction.

Median birthweight was significantly lower in pregnancies with cervicovaginal atresia (2400 g, IQR 2350–3000) than in other anomaly groups (3040 g, IQR 2794–3145; Mann–Whitney $U = 1252$, $Z = -3.91$, $p < 0.001$). Because rates of preterm birth were comparable across groups, these lower weights are unlikely to be explained by gestational age alone. Using the Hadlock fetal growth chart¹¹⁵, small-for-gestational-age (SGA, <10th percentile) infants were identified in 22.2% of cervicovaginal atresia births, compared with 14.3% in OHVIRA, 11.7% in functional rudimentary horn, and fewer than 5% in anomalies confined to the lower genital tract such as transverse septum or imperforate hymen. Hadlock centiles were used as a pragmatic and widely applied reference, as ethnicity- or country-specific growth standards were not consistently reported across included studies.

Malpresentation occurred in 20% of reported pregnancies (73/359), most frequently among duplication anomalies, with rates of 27% in OHVIRA and 28.9% in functional rudimentary horn, compared with fewer than 10% in lower-tract anomalies.

Caesarean was performed in 55.9% (264/472) of pregnancies for which mode of birth data were available, again varying by anomaly type: 63.7% in OHVIRA, 52.7% in functional rudimentary horn, and 97.6% in cervicovaginal atresia, where prior reconstructive surgery generally necessitated elective caesarean birth. Caesarean delivery was also frequent among women with transverse vaginal septum (41.7%). In contrast, rates were lower in imperforate hymen (23.1%). Among pregnancies with available data, the distribution of caesarean delivery closely paralleled the pattern of malpresentation ($p < 0.001$), but was also influenced by surgical considerations, including previous horn excision and cervicovaginal anastomosis, which often preclude a trial of labour.

Maternal morbidity

Hypertensive disorders of pregnancy (gestational hypertension or pre-eclampsia) were reported in 9% of ongoing pregnancies for which this outcome was documented (34/379). In a secondary multivariable logistic model restricted to these cases, the presence of a renal anomaly remained independently associated with hypertensive disorder (adjusted OR 7.11, 95% CI 1.9–26.6, $p = 0.003$), after controlling for maternal age, use of ART, and anomaly subtype. The corresponding unadjusted association was more modest (OR 2.62, 95% CI 1.19–5.78, $p = 0.02$). Results of the full model are provided in [Supplementary Table S2](#).

Sensitivity analyses

Sensitivity analyses were conducted to assess the influence of very small case series on pooled outcomes. After excluding studies that included fewer than four participants, the overall live-birth rate remained stable at 81.9%, compared with 82.4% in the primary analysis. Rates of preterm birth (23.1%) and caesarean delivery (52.2%) were likewise unchanged. These findings indicate that exclusion of small studies did not materially alter the pooled reproductive or obstetric outcomes, supporting the robustness of the overall results.

Discussion

This review provides the largest quantitative synthesis of reproductive outcomes after surgical correction of obstructive genital tract anomalies. By pooling previously fragmented data, it defines the reproductive prognosis across anomaly types—ranging from excellent outcomes after distal outflow obstruction of urogenital-sinus origin to markedly reduced fertility in complex upper-tract anomalies. These findings provide a consolidated evidence base to guide counselling and clinical planning.

Distal outflow obstruction is associated with the most favourable

reproductive potential. For imperforate hymen, outcomes are excellent following membranotomy. One large retrospective cohort, however, reported higher rates of caesarean section and infertility compared with more than 70,000 controls without hymenal anomalies [22]. This isolated finding should be interpreted cautiously, as most series report normal conception and term delivery rates [17,66,76,87].

Published data on transverse vaginal septum are sparse and heterogeneous, with variable success after septal resection or Z-plasty despite an anatomically intact uterus and cervix. Contributing factors may include restenosis, fibrosis, altered cervical alignment, or tubal damage. Wierrani et al. reported eight pregnancies following modified Z-plasty, all resulting in term vaginal births [101], but such outcomes are rarely replicated. These observations highlight the need for prospective, multicentre studies with standardised reporting to identify modifiable predictors of reproductive success. It is also important to recognise that reduced fertility following correction of certain anomalies—particularly transverse vaginal septum—may reflect acquired or postoperative factors rather than the congenital pathology alone. Recurrent stenosis, the need for prolonged or repeated vaginal dilatation, dyspareunia, or other sexual dysfunction following reconstruction may reduce the frequency or feasibility of penetrative intercourse and thereby contribute to delayed conception or infertility. In this context, reported fertility outcomes may capture the downstream impact of surgical consequences and functional vaginal anatomy, rather than intrinsic reproductive potential. This distinction is clinically important when counselling patients and interpreting fertility outcomes across anomaly types.

Among duplication anomalies, conception rates appear relatively preserved but obstetric vulnerability is evident. The pooled preterm birth rate of 28%—three times higher than the population average [112,113]—together with increased malpresentation and caesarean delivery rates, supports intensified antenatal surveillance. Joki-Erikilä et al. [66] further noted lower birthweights among women with OHVIRA compared with those with transverse vaginal septum suggesting that anatomical configuration may influence pregnancy physiology.

The coexistence of unilateral renal agenesis adds further obstetric risk. Renal anomalies were most prevalent in OHVIRA spectrum but were also observed in other phenotypes, including functional rudimentary horns and transverse vaginal septum; renal anomaly and anomaly subtype were therefore included concurrently in the multivariable model ([Supplementary Table S2](#)) to distinguish their independent associations with hypertensive disorders of pregnancy. In the present review, women with an associated renal anomaly showed significantly higher rates of hypertensive disorders of pregnancy, consistent with data from both congenital and acquired single-kidney populations, where gestational hypertensive disorders are more frequent than in matched controls [114–116]. These findings support early monitoring of blood pressure and renal function, and consideration of prophylactic low-dose aspirin [117].

The recent 2025 in-depth analysis of OHVIRA concluded that fertility in affected women is “normal compared with the general population” [118]. However, this interpretation was based on descriptive rather than pooled quantitative data. The present synthesis suggests a more nuanced picture: conception rates are broadly maintained, yet obstetric complications occur more frequently. Further research should determine whether preventive strategies for preterm birth—such as progesterone therapy or cervical-length surveillance—are effective in this context.

Data for cervicovaginal or cervical atresia remain sparse but expanding, and the present synthesis prior systematic reviews [8], providing a clearer estimate of reproductive potential after reconstruction. These anomalies carry the poorest fertility prognosis within the obstructive spectrum. Even after successful canalization, conception rates seldom exceed 40–50% and preterm birth is common. Emerging surgical series further suggest that reproductive prognosis following cervical reconstruction varies by anatomic subtype, with less severe forms retaining residual cervical tissue achieving better functional and reproductive outcomes than complete cervical agenesis, contributing to

the wide range of reported outcomes [16]. Importantly, this review is the first to synthesise birthweight data across anomaly types and demonstrates a strong association between cervicovaginal atresia and small-for-gestational-age infants. The risk of cervical insufficiency and uterine rupture following extensive reconstruction highlights the importance of tertiary-centre management and individualised counselling.

Endometriosis prevalence varied by anomaly type, consistent with evidence that risk rises with more proximal obstruction [2]. It was rarely reported in imperforate hymen but more frequent among women with upper-vaginal, cervical, or uterine-horn anomalies. This pattern supports retrograde menstruation as a key mechanism, although ascertainment bias is possible, as distal anomalies seldom require laparoscopy for diagnosis or management. Most reports describe resolution of even advanced endometriosis following surgical relief of obstruction [27,119,120], yet long-term gynecological outcomes remain uncertain. Because anomalies most prone to endometriosis also distort uterine anatomy and cervical alignment, the present data cannot determine whether endometriosis independently contributes to subfertility. Larger pooled analyses adjusting for anomaly type and surgical approach may clarify this relationship.

Ectopic pregnancy in residual functional horns remains a recognised but preventable complication. Although such cases were excluded from the pooled analysis, uncorrected or residual horns carry a substantial risk of rupture and maternal morbidity [121,122]. Complete excision of a functional non-communicating horn eliminates this risk and should be incorporated into pre-operative counselling and surgical planning.

This study's principal strength lies in its scope and methodological rigor. It is the first to quantitatively pool reproductive and obstetric outcomes across the full range of obstructive genital tract anomalies, drawing from a global evidence base. Detailed extraction of conception mode, miscarriage, preterm birth, and neonatal outcomes provides granularity not previously available. Quality appraisal using JBI criteria showed that most studies were methodologically sound.

However, several constraints must be acknowledged. The predominance of small, descriptive case series introduces substantial risk of publication bias. Outcome definitions were inconsistent and follow-up was variable. Some outcomes—particularly endometriosis and infertility—were likely under-ascertained. The pooled analyses cannot fully adjust for confounding by anomaly type, surgical technique, or severity. The use of a single fetal growth reference may misclassify small-for-gestational-age status in some populations, as ethnicity- or country-specific growth standards were not consistently available across included studies. Finally, data on postoperative endometriosis resolution and long-term obstetric complications remain sparse, highlighting the need for coordinated multicentre registries and standardised reporting.

The pooled data presented here provide a practical resource for clinicians counselling women after surgical correction of obstructive genital tract anomalies. They underscore the heterogeneity of reproductive prognosis and the need for tailored surveillance strategies:

- **Imperforate hymen:** fertility outcomes are excellent and routine obstetric care is generally sufficient once normal anatomy is restored.
- **Transverse vaginal septum:** requires longer-term follow-up to detect restenosis or secondary tubal damage; postoperative functional factors such as the need for ongoing dilatation or dyspareunia may also influence fertility, and early fertility assessment is recommended if conception is delayed.
- **Anomalies associated with renal agenesis (e.g., OHVIRA):** monitor closely for hypertensive disorders and fetal growth restriction; consider low-dose aspirin where appropriate.
- **Functional non-communicating horns:** ensure complete excision to eliminate the risk of ectopic pregnancy and rupture.
- **Cervical and cervicovaginal reconstructions:** consider serial cervical-length assessment, and in selected cases prophylactic or

interval cerclage, including abdominal approaches described in the literature. Caesarean section required in most reported cases.

- **All women with repaired upper-tract obstruction:** consider antenatal surveillance for preterm birth and intrauterine growth restriction, which were more frequently observed in these anomalies in the present review.

Future research should aim to standardise outcome reporting, incorporate prospective fertility and obstetric follow-up, and explore targeted preventive interventions. Whether progesterone supplementation or cervical-length screening can reduce preterm birth in these patients warrants formal evaluation. The potential contribution of postoperative endometriosis to ongoing subfertility should also be clarified through longitudinal imaging and laparoscopic studies.

Although the anomalies included here vary in anatomy and embryologic origin, they share the unifying mechanism of menstrual outflow obstruction prior to repair and the overarching goal of restoring reproductive function. Their reproductive trajectories do not align neatly along a simple distal–proximal gradient; rather, outcomes reflect the interplay between anatomic complexity, surgical restoration, and residual functional capacity of the cervix and uterus.

Conclusion

This systematic review provides the most comprehensive quantitative evaluation of fertility and obstetric outcomes following surgical correction of obstructive genital tract anomalies to date. It highlights encouraging overall reproductive potential but substantial variation between anomaly types. The data support tailored counselling, antenatal surveillance, and the development of evidence-based preventive strategies for adverse pregnancy outcomes. Continued collaboration through multicentre registries will be essential to refine prognostication and optimise reproductive care for affected women.

Submission declaration

This manuscript has not been published previously and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere, except in the form of an abstract, academic thesis, preprint, published lecture, or registered report. Its publication has been approved by all authors and by the responsible authorities where the work was carried out. If accepted, this manuscript will not be published elsewhere in the same form, in English or in any other language, including electronically, without the written consent of the copyright-holder.

The authors confirm that this submission complies with Elsevier's policies on multiple, redundant, or concurrent publication. The manuscript may be screened using plagiarism detection and other editorial screening tools to verify originality and compliance with journal policies.

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process

During the preparation of this work the authors used ChatGPT to improve readability and language. After using this tool/service, the authors reviewed and edited the content as needed and take full responsibility for the content of the published article.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Natalie Drever: Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Supervision, Methodology, Investigation, Formal analysis, Conceptualization. **Chloe Gane:** Writing – review & editing, Methodology, Investigation, Data curation. **Madison Bailey:** Writing – review & editing, Investigation, Data curation.

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Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Appendix A. . Eligibility criteria

	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Population	Human studies that include women with an obstructive reproductive anomaly: - Imperforate hymen - Transverse vaginal septum - Obstructed longitudinal septum - OHVIRA - Cervical agenesis - Distal vaginal agenesis - Obstructed uterine septum - Obstructed uterine horn	- Animal studies. - Studies that do not include women with an obstructive reproductive anomaly. - Studies that only include women with non-obstructive reproductive tract anomalies.
Exposure	Studies with surgical correction of obstructive reproductive tract anomaly.	
Outcome	Studies reporting at least one of the following reproductive outcomes: - Fertility - Miscarriage - Preterm birth - Mode of delivery - Stillbirth - Malpresentation - Postpartum haemorrhage - Shoulder dystocia - Ectopic pregnancy	- Studies not reporting reproductive outcomes. - Studies focusing only on surgical outcomes without reproductive outcome data.
Timeframe	All reported timeframes will be included.	
Methodology	Primary observational studies including: - Descriptive observational studies: case series, cross-sectional studies. - Analytical observational study designs (prospective or retrospective case-control, cohort, cross-sectional).	- Case reports - Secondary sources of evidence including systematic reviews and meta-analyses. - Opinions, letters to the editor, book chapters, news articles. - Protocols and guidelines - Experimental studies
Publication status	Studies will be included regardless of publication status.	
Time period	No date limits will apply.	
Language	Studies published in any language	

Appendix B. . Search strategy

PubMed

- #1 (((("uterus/abnormalities"[MeSH Terms]) OR ("vagina/abnormalities"[MeSH Terms]) OR ("vaginal diseases/congenital"[MeSH Terms]) OR ("uterine cervical diseases/congenital"[MeSH Terms]) OR ("cervix uteri/abnormalities"[MeSH Terms]))
- #2 "imperforate hymen" OR "transverse vaginal septum" OR "longitudinal vaginal septum*" OR "longitudinal vaginal septa" OR ohvira OR "obstructed hemivagina and ipsilateral renal anomaly" OR "cervical agenesis" OR "distal vaginal agenesis" OR "obstructed uterine horn" OR cryptomenorrhea OR "mullerian duct anomal*" OR "mullerian malformations" OR "obstructed mullerian duct" OR "obstructed mullerian duct anomalies" OR "obstructed uterovaginal anomalies" OR "obstructed vaginal septum" OR "obstructing vaginal septum" OR "obstructed vagina" OR "uterus abnormalities" OR "vagina abnormalities" OR "cervix uteri abnormalities"
- #3 #1 OR #2
- #4 (((((((((((((((((((((((((((((((("fertility"[MeSH Terms]) OR ("infertility"[MeSH Terms]) OR (pregnancy rate[MeSH Terms]) OR ("abortion, spontaneous"[MeSH Terms]) OR (premature birth[MeSH Terms]) OR (caesarean section[MeSH Terms]) OR ("parturition"[MeSH Terms]) OR ("live birth"[MeSH Terms]) OR ("term birth"[MeSH Terms]) OR ("fetal death"[MeSH Terms]) OR (stillbirth[MeSH Terms]) OR ("abortion, habitual"[MeSH Terms]) OR ("fertilization in vitro"[MeSH Terms]) OR (reproductive techniques, assisted[MeSH Terms]) OR ("embryo transfer"[MeSH Terms]) OR ("labor presentation"[MeSH Terms]) OR ("breech presentation"[MeSH Terms]) OR ("placenta, retained"[MeSH Terms]) OR ("cerclage, cervical"[MeSH Terms]) OR ("obstetrical forceps"[MeSH Terms]) OR ("vacuum extraction, obstetrical"[MeSH Terms]) OR ("pregnancy, ectopic"[MeSH Terms]) OR (pregnancy, tubal[MeSH Terms]) OR ("fetal membranes, premature rupture"[MeSH Terms]) OR ("fetal growth retardation"[MeSH Terms]) OR ("obstetric labor, premature"[MeSH Terms]) OR ("placenta previa"[MeSH Terms]) OR ("abruptio placentae"[MeSH Terms]) OR ("birth weight"[MeSH Terms]) OR ("polyhydramnios"[MeSH Terms]) OR ("postpartum hemorrhage"[MeSH Terms]) OR ("pregnancy outcome"[MeSH Terms])
- #5 fertility OR infertility OR "pregnancy rate" OR miscarriage OR "spontaneous miscarriage" OR "preterm birth" OR "preterm delivery" OR "premature birth" OR "premature delivery" OR "caesarean section" OR c-section OR "vaginal delivery" OR "natural delivery" OR "term delivery" OR stillbirth OR "foetal death" OR "live birth" OR "foetal survival rates" OR abortion OR "spontaneous abortion" OR "recurrent abortion" OR conceive OR conception OR IVF OR "in vitro fertilization" OR "assisted reproductive technologies" OR "embryo transfer" OR "breech delivery" OR "breech presentation" OR "transverse lie" OR "transverse presentation" OR malpresentation OR "retained placenta" OR "cervical cerclage" OR "shortened cervix" OR "instrumental delivery" OR ventouse OR vacuum OR forceps OR "natural conception" OR "ectopic pregnancy" OR "tubal pregnancy" OR "premature rupture of membranes" OR PROM OR "intrauterine growth restriction" OR IUGR OR "preterm labour" OR "premature labour" OR "placenta previa" OR "placental abruptio" OR "mean birth weight" OR "polyhydramnios" OR "postpartum haemorrhage" OR "reproductive outcome" OR "pregnancy outcome"
- #6 #4 OR #5
- #7 #3 AND #6

CINAHL.

- | | |
|----|--|
| S1 | “imperforate hymen” OR “transverse vaginal septum*” OR “longitudinal vaginal septum*” OR “longitudinal vaginal septa” OR “obstructed vaginal septum*” OR ohvira OR
“obstructed hemivagina and ipsilateral renal anomaly” OR “cervical agenesis” OR “distal vaginal agenesis” OR “obstructed uterine horn*” OR cryptomenorrhea OR “mullerian
duct anomal*” OR “mullerian duct malformation*” OR “mullerian malformation*” OR “obstructed mullerian duct” OR “obstructed mullerian duct analomal*” OR
“obstructed uterovaginal anomaly” OR “obstructed vagina” OR “uterus abnormal*” OR “uterine abnormal*” OR “vagina abnormal*” OR “vaginal abnormal*” |
| S2 | (MH “Fertility”) OR (MH “Infertility”) OR (MH “Abortion, Spontaneous”) OR (MH “Childbirth, Premature”) OR (MH “Cesarean Section”) OR (MH “Vaginal Birth”) OR (MH
“Delivery, Obstetric”) OR (MH “Term Birth”) OR (MH “Perinatal Death”) OR (MH “Abortion, Habitual”) OR (MH “Fertilization in Vitro”) OR (MH “Reproduction Techniques”) OR
(MH “Breech Delivery”) OR (MH “Breech Presentation”) OR (MH “Labor Presentation”) OR (MH “Placenta, Retained”) OR (MH “Cervical, Cervical”) OR (MH “Obstetrical
Forceps”) OR (MH “Pregnancy, Ectopic”) OR (MH “Fetal Membranes, Premature Rupture”) OR (MH “Fetal Growth Retardation”) OR (MH “Labor, Premature”) OR (MH “Placenta
Praevia”) OR (MH “Abruptio Placentae”) OR (MH “Birth Weight”) OR (MH “Polyhydramnios”) OR (MH Postpartum Hemorrhage”) OR (MH “Pregnancy Outcomes”) |
| S3 | fer0lity OR infer0lity OR “pregnancy rate” OR miscarriage OR “spontaneous miscarriage” OR “preterm birth” OR “preterm delivery” OR “premature birth” OR “premature
delivery” OR “caesarean sec0on” OR c-sec0on OR “vaginal delivery” OR “natural delivery” OR “term delivery” OR s0llbirth OR “foetal death” OR “live birth” OR “foetal survival
rates” OR abor0on OR “spontaneous abor0on” OR “induced abor0on” OR termina0on OR “recurrent abor0on” OR conceive OR concep0on OR IVF OR “in vitro fer0lisa0on” OR
“assisted reproduc0ve technologies” OR “embryo transfer” OR “breech delivery” OR “breech presenta0on” OR “transverse lie” OR “transverse presenta0on” OR malpresenta0on
OR “retained placenta” OR “cervical cerclage” OR “shortened cervix” OR “instrumental delivery” OR ventouse OR vacuum OR forceps OR “natural concep0on” OR “ectopic
pregnancy” OR “tubal pregnancy” OR “premature rupture of membranes” OR PROM OR “intrauterine growth restric0on” OR IUGR OR “preterm labour” OR “premature labour”
OR |
| S4 | “placenta previa” OR “placental abrup0on” OR “mean birth weight” OR “polyhydramnios” OR “postpartum haemorrhage” OR “reproduc0ve outcome” OR “pregnancy outcome” |
| S5 | S2 OR S3
S1 AND S4 |

Emcare

- #1 Exp uterine cervix disease/cn [Congenital Disorder] OR exp uterus malformation/cn [Congenital Disorder] OR exp vagina disease/cn [Congenital Disorder] OR exp muellerian duct/ OR exp female genital tract malformation/cn [Congenital Disorder] OR exp urogenital tract malformation/cn [Congenital Disorder]
- #2 imperforate [hymen.mp](#) OR transverse vaginal [septum.mp](#) OR longitudinal vaginal [septum.mp](#) OR longitudinal vaginal [septa.mp](#) OR [ohvira.mp](#) OR obstructed hemivagina and ipsilateral renal [anomaly.mp](#) OR cervical [agenesis.mp](#) OR distal vaginal [agenesis.mp](#) OR obstructed uterine [horn.mp](#) OR [cryptomenorrhea.mp](#) OR mullerian duct anomal*.mp OR mullerian [malformations.mp](#) OR obstructed mullerian duct anomal*.mp OR obstructed uterovaginal anomal*.mp OR obstructed vaginal [septum.mp](#) OR obstructing vaginal [septum.mp](#) OR obstructed [vagina.mp](#) OR uterus [malformation.mp](#) OR uterine cervix [diseases.mp](#) OR vagina [disease.mp](#) OR female genital tract [malformation.mp](#)
- #3 #1 or #2
- #4 exp fertility/ OR exp infertility/ OR exp pregnancy rate/ OR exp spontaneous abortion/ OR exp prematurity/ OR exp premature labor/ OR exp cesarean section/ OR exp vaginal delivery/ OR exp stillbirth/ OR exp fetus death/ OR exp live birth/ OR exp recurrent abortion/ OR exp conception/ OR exp fertilization in vitro/ OR exp infertility therapy/ OR exp instrumental delivery/ OR exp breech extraction/ OR exp vacuum extraction/ OR exp forceps delivery/ OR exp malpresentation/ OR exp breech presentation/ OR exp retained placenta/ OR exp uterine cervix cerclage/ OR exp ectopic pregnancy/ OR exp "premature rupture of membranes"/ OR exp intrauterine growth retardation/ OR exp placenta previa/ OR exp birth weight/ OR exp polyhydramnios/ OR exp postpartum hemorrhage/ OR exp pregnancy outcome
- #5 [fertility.mp](#) OR [infertility.mp](#) OR exp pregnancy [rate.mp](#) OR [miscarriage.mp](#) OR spontaneous [miscarriage.mp](#) OR preterm [birth.mp](#) OR preterm [delivery.mp](#) OR premature [birth.mp](#) OR premature [delivery.mp](#) OR caesarean [section.mp](#) OR [c-section.mp](#) OR vaginal [delivery.mp](#) OR natural [delivery.mp](#) OR term [delivery.mp](#) OR [stillbirth.mp](#) OR foetal [death.mp](#) OR live [birth.mp](#) OR foetal survival [rates.mp](#) OR [abortion.mp](#) OR spontaneous [abortion.mp](#) OR recurrent [abortion.mp](#) OR [conceive.mp](#) OR [conception.mp](#) OR [IVF.mp](#) OR in vitro [fertilisation.mp](#) OR assisted reproductive [technologies.mp](#) OR embryo [transfer.mp](#) OR breech [delivery.mp](#) OR breech [presentation.mp](#) OR transverse [lie.mp](#) OR transverse [presentation.mp](#) OR [malpresentation.mp](#) OR retained [placenta.mp](#) OR cervical [cerclage.mp](#) OR shortened [cervix.mp](#) OR instrumental [delivery.mp](#) OR [ventouse.mp](#) OR [vacuum.mp](#) OR [forceps.mp](#) OR natural [conception.mp](#) OR ectopic [pregnancy.mp](#) OR tubal [pregnancy.mp](#) OR premature rupture of [membranes.mp](#) OR [PROM.mp](#) OR intrauterine growth [restriction.mp](#) OR [IUGR.mp](#) OR preterm [labour.mp](#) OR premature [labour.mp](#) OR placenta [previa.mp](#) OR placental [abruption.mp](#) OR mean birth [weight.mp](#) OR [polyhydramnios.mp](#) OR postpartum [haemorrhage.mp](#) OR reproductive [outcome.mp](#) OR pregnancy [outcome.mp](#)
- #6 #4 OR #5
- #7 #3 AND #6

Scopus

- | | |
|----|---|
| #1 | <p>"imperforate hymen" OR "transverse vaginal septum" OR "longitudinal vaginal septum*" OR "longitudinal vaginal septa" OR ohvira OR "obstructed hemivagina and ipsilateral renal anomaly" OR "cervical agenesis" OR "distal vaginal agenesis" OR "obstructed uterine horn" OR cryptomenorrhea OR "mullerian duct anomal*" OR "mullerian malforma0ons" OR "obstructed mullerian duct" OR "obstructed mullerian duct anomalies" OR "obstructed uterovaginal anomalies" OR "obstructed vaginal septum" OR "obstruc0ng vaginal septum" OR "obstructed vagina" OR "uterus abnormali0es" OR "vaginaabnormali0es" OR "cervix uteri abnormali0es"</p> |
| #2 | <p>fer0lity OR infer0lity OR "pregnancy rate" OR miscarriage OR "spontaneous miscarriage" OR "preterm birth" OR "preterm delivery" OR "premature birth" OR "premature delivery" OR "caesarean sec0on" OR c-sec0on OR "vaginal delivery" OR "natural delivery" OR "term delivery" OR sollbirth OR "foetal death" OR "live birth" OR "foetal survival rates" OR abor0on OR "spontaneous abor0on" OR termina0on OR "recurrent abor0on" OR conceive OR concep0on OR IVF OR "in vitro fer0lisa0on" OR "assisted reproduc0ve technologies" OR "embryo transfer" OR "breech delivery" OR "breech presenta0on" OR "transverse lie" OR "transverse presenta0on" OR malpresenta0on OR "retained placenta" OR "cervical cerclage" OR "shortened cervix" OR "instrumental delivery" OR ventouse OR vacuum OR forceps OR "natural concep0on" OR "ectopic pregnancy" OR "tubal pregnancy" OR "premature rupture of membranes" OR PROM OR "intrauterine growth restric0on" OR IUGR OR "preterm labour" OR "premature labour" OR "placenta previa" OR "placental abrup0on" OR "mean birth weight" OR "polyhydramnios" OR "postpartum haemorrhage" OR "reproduc0ve outcome" OR "pregnancy outcome" OR "follow up" OR "long term follow up"</p> |
| #3 | #1 AND #2 |

Appendix C. Supplementary data

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejogrb.2026.115014>.

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