

EXTENDED WIGGLESWORTH CLASSIFICATION

- Category 1. Congenital defect/malformation (lethal or severe):** Only **lethal** or potentially lethal congenital malformation should be included here. **Serious biochemical abnormalities** such as **Tay Sach's disease** and any known single gene defects known to have a high risk of death should be included.
- Category 2 Unexplained antepartum fetal death:** Most late fetal losses should be coded here. Where a live-born baby dies due to problems during the antepartum period, code this as 'other specific causes' (category 6).
- Category 3 Death from intrapartum 'asphyxia', 'anoxia' or 'trauma':** This category covers any baby who would have survived but for some catastrophe occurring during labour. These babies will tend to be normally formed, stillborn or with poor Apgar scores, possible meconium aspiration or evidence of acidosis. Very premature infants (those less than 24 weeks gestation) may be asphyxiated at birth, but should not be entered in this category as a rule.
- Category 4 Immaturity:** This applies to live births only, who subsequently die from structural pulmonary immaturity, surfactant deficiency, intra ventricular haemorrhage, or their late consequences - including chronic lung damage.
- Category 5 Infection:** This applies where there is clear microbiological evidence of infection that could have caused death, e.g. maternal infection with Group B streptococci, rubella, parvovirus, syphilis etc; or in the case of a baby dying with overwhelming sepsis.
- Category 6 Other specific causes:** Use this if there is a specific recognisable fetal, neonatal or paediatric condition not covered under the earlier categories. Examples include:
(1) **fetal** conditions; twin-to-twin transfusion and hydrops fetalis;
(2) **neonatal** conditions; pulmonary haemorrhage, pulmonary hypoplasia due to prolonged loss of liquor (primary hypoplasia being classed as a malformation), persistent transitional circulation (in the absence of infection, aspiration or surfactant deficiency), blood loss unassociated with trauma (e.g. vasa praevia);
(3) **paediatric** conditions; malignancy and acute abdominal catastrophe (such as volvulus without antecedent congenital malrotation).
- Category 7 Accident or non-intrapartum trauma:** Confirmed non-accidental injury should be coded here. If only suspected, code as a sudden infant death cause unknown (category 8)
- Category 8 Sudden infant death, cause unknown:** This will include all infants in whom the cause is unknown or unsuspected at the time of death. Modification due to postmortem information should be notified later.
- Category 9 Unclassifiable:** To be used as a last resort. Details must be given if this option is ticked.