

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

BOARD OF REGISTRATION IN MEDICINE

POLICY 03-05

(Adopted December 17, 2003)

POLICY REGARDING KEEPSAKE FETAL VIDEOS

The Massachusetts Board of Registration in Medicine (Board) recently considered the issue of whether the use of ultrasound technology solely to produce keepsake fetal videos for entertainment purposes constitutes the responsible practice of medicine. Although no harmful effects from fetal diagnostic ultrasonography have been independently validated to date, the Board supports the position taken by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) in its Committee Opinion regarding safety standards to minimize fetal exposure to ultrasound. In this opinion, ACOG states that: “The appropriate use of fetal ultrasonography includes performing examinations only when there is diagnostic information to be obtained.”<sup>1</sup>

Board members remind Massachusetts physicians that the Food & Drug Administration has determined the use of fetal ultrasound solely for commemorative purposes to be an unapproved use of a Class II medical device. In addition, the American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine has warned that nondiagnostic fetal imaging without medical indication is inappropriate, medically irresponsible, and potentially unsafe.

The Board urges all Massachusetts physicians to prudently refrain from performing nondiagnostic scans for commemorative purposes or from referring patients to other practitioners who are engaged in this practice.

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<sup>1</sup> ACOG Committee Opinion, *New Ultrasound Output Display Standard*, Number 180, November 1996.