Little research has focused on how pregnant women feel regarding their decisions about prenatal diagnosis. Specifically, control, conflict and confidence have not been evaluated. The purpose of this study was to describe the control, conflict and confidence felt by patients referred for advanced maternal age (AMA) and abnormal maternal serum screen (ABMSS) regarding the decision whether to have or not have amniocentesis. All variables, referral indication, demographics and pregnancy history were analyzed to look for differences that might impact control, conflict and confidence.

The complete questionnaire consisted of three previously validated questionnaires: Perceived Personal Control scale, Decisional Conflict Scale and Satisfaction with Decision Scale. Demographic and pregnancy history information was obtained in twelve additional questions.

A total of 173 patients were recruited for participation in this study; 123 (71.1%) were referred for AMA and 50 (28.9%) were referred for ABMSS. Overall, patients referred for genetic counseling for either indication feel they have control and confidence, and experience little conflict regarding their decision about prenatal diagnosis. However, when data was compared by indication, the control scores for the AMA group were significantly lower indicating more control over their situation and decision regarding amniocentesis. No differences were found between women referred for AMA and those referred for ABMSS with regards to conflict and confidence. Two factors, race and language, which are related, had a significant effect. Patients referred for genetic counseling that were Hispanic or Asian had more conflict with their decision and patients who spoke a language other than English had less confidence in their decision regarding prenatal diagnosis. Overall, patients in this study felt that they had control, confidence and little conflict with their decision. This suggests that in this population, genetic counseling goals are being met.