The impact of gestational diabetes on maternal and foetal health has been increasingly recognized. However, universal consensus on the diagnostic methods and thresholds has long been lacking. The recently published Hyperglycemia and Adverse Pregnancy Outcomes (HAPO) study has been used to confirm the link between hyperglycaemia and maternal-foetal complications. Two randomized controlled trials of treatment for mild maternal hyperglycaemia were carried out successfully during the period of the HAPO study. In response to these studies, the International Association of Diabetes and Pregnancy Study Groups (IADPSG) has proposed new guidelines for the screening and diagnosis of gestational diabetes mellitus. Given the fact that the potential economic impact of the IADPSG guidelines is unknown, and with minimal long-term data yet available on the offspring of the HAPO cohort, a true cost-effectiveness analysis will be difficult to accurately perform. Regardless, these guidelines serve to advance the discussion on the appropriate screening and diagnosis of diabetes in pregnancy.

In 1996, the Francophone Society of Diabetes (SFD) and the National Assembly of French Gynaecologists and Obstetricians (CNGOF) recommended universal screening of gestational diabetes based on a two-step strategy. In 2005, the French National Authority for Health (HAS) was not able to draw a conclusion as to the best strategy for screening and diagnosis of gestational diabetes mellitus. Given the fact that the potential economic impact of the IADPSG guidelines is unknown, and with minimal long-term data yet available on the offspring of the HAPO cohort, a true cost-effectiveness analysis will be difficult to accurately perform. Regardless, these guidelines serve to advance the discussion on the appropriate screening and diagnosis of diabetes in pregnancy.

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While the screening and diagnostic guidelines recommended by the IADPSG do not differ drastically from those already followed in much of Europe, it was necessary that they be discussed among French professional organizations to decide if they will be approved by the French practitioners. The SFD and the CNGOF thus felt it was necessary to resubmit the question of gestational screening by looking at it from different angles and answering the following questions: Who should be screened in France? When? Using which tests and diagnostic criteria? And what kind of care could be proposed in accordance with our clinical practice?

After an exhaustive review of the literature and an analysis of the IADPSG consensus, our two societies, the SFD and CNGOF, proposed an expert consensus on gestational diabetes mellitus for clinical practice in France.