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Effects of Non-Supine Labor & Delivery

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PICO Statement

P – Pregnant mothers

I – Non supine labor and delivery positioning and education

C – Supine labor and delivery

O – Less perineal trauma & shorter 2nd stage of labor

Interventions

Labor Positioning Options

- Recumbent/Supine
- Use of warm water (birthing tub)
- Kneeling with birthing ball
- Swaying
- Rocking
- Leaning forward
- Lunging
- Kneeling
- Squatting
- Hands and knees
- Side lying
- Counterpressure
- Use of combs

Delivery Positioning Options

- Recumbent/Supine
- Side lying
- **Squatting**
- **Sitting**
- **Leaning forward using birthing bar**
- On hands and knees

Purpose

Three main goals include:

- . Knowledge of alternative methods of labor and delivery compared to the traditional supine position
- . Understand benefits of non supine positioning
- . Education to mothers

It is important to first discuss the different positioning options for labor and delivery.

Labor Findings

- Shorter duration of second stage of labor (from 10 cm of dilatation to birth of baby)
- In positions like kneeling or all fours, weight is moved off of the tailbone which increases comfort (this is particularly helpful for those with strong back labor)
- Widens dimensions of pelvis to help baby get into optimal position for delivery
- Less use of oxytocin (or Pitocin) to encourage labor pharmacologically

Delivery / Postpartum Findings

- . For primigravida mothers, upright positions can reduce the duration of the 2nd stage of labor
- . Decreased episiotomy rates
- . Reduces complications of delivery (use of forceps and vacuum assisted births)
- . Reduced vulvar edema
- . Decreased risk of perineal tear
- . Decreased risk of fetal heart rate abnormalities
- . 2.1% increased risk of blood loss > 500 mL

Outcomes

Maternal

- Less perineal trauma which leads to improved perineal integrity
- More comfortable labor
- Shorter duration of labor

Fetal

- Higher apgar scores
- Decreased abnormalities of FHR
- Optimal positioning for delivery

Summary

Although 68% of women deliver via the supine position, there are many benefits to non-supine positions for both mom and baby. Mothers should be educated on interventions associated with labor and delivery that could reduce the risk of complications during birth.

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