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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Water birth: is the water an additional reservoir for group B streptococcus?

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Abstract

Objective: Water birth became popular in the last years, despite the fact that many questions like the risk of infection for the newborn remain unanswered. Group B streptococcal (GBS) infections in the newborn remain a challenge in obstetrics and neonatology. **Method:** We conducted a prospective trial to study the impact of water birth on the colonization rate of the bath water and, more importantly, the GBS-colonization rate of the newborn. **Result:** After water birth the bath water was significantly more often colonized with GBS than after immersion followed by a delivery in bed. The newborns, however, showed no difference in GBS colonization and there was even a trend towards less GBS colonization of the newborn after a water delivery. **Conclusion:** Regarding GBS colonization of the newborn during water birth there might be a wash out effect, which protects the children during the delivery.

Keywords Immersion - Water delivery - Group B streptococcus

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