

# What information do pregnant women receive about labour and childbirth around the time of their pregnancy?

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## Introduction

- The use of instrumentation (forceps and/or ventouse) at childbirth is one of the main risk factors for obstetric anal sphincter injuries.
- These may cause faecal incontinence and change significantly quality of life.
- The aim of this study was to assess the level of information about labour and childbirth received by pregnant women awaiting a vaginal delivery.

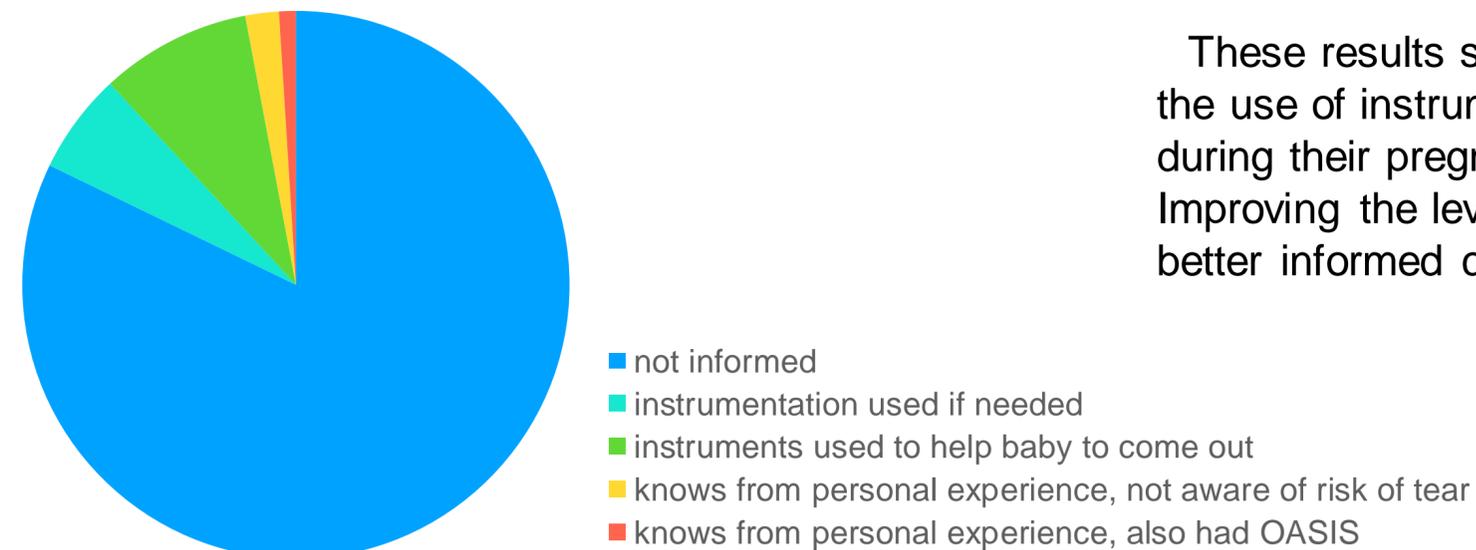
## Methods

- Favourable opinion was granted by the assigned Research Ethics Committee.
- Women of at least 36 weeks pregnant were consented to take a questionnaire on information received during pregnancy.
- Answers were analysed in a qualitative and quantitative fashion.

## Results

116 women took the questionnaire. The framework analysis of definition of labour highlighted that 33 (28%) mostly primipara, were able to define labour with description of the appropriate signs and symptoms. Five (4%) were able to describe the stages of labour. Seventeen (15%) attended antenatal classes during this pregnancy, 4 (3%) of these privately.

The main topic taught was breastfeeding and care of the baby after birth. Fifty eight (50%) women exclusively met midwives during their antenatal appointments and 57(49,1%) met both midwives and doctors.



## Results continued

When asked if they were informed about possible use of instrumentation (see Figure 1): 96(83%) were not informed, 7(6%) only know that it is used if needed, 11(9%) were told that it is used to help baby coming out, 3(2%) know from personal experience and 1 (0,9%) was aware of risk of tear. Eight(7%) women commented a risk of a temporary mark or change in shape of the head of the baby following use of instrumentation.

## Conclusion

These results show that the information about the use of instrumentation that women gain during their pregnancy is very limited. Improving the level of information can offer a better informed choice about childbirth.