

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.

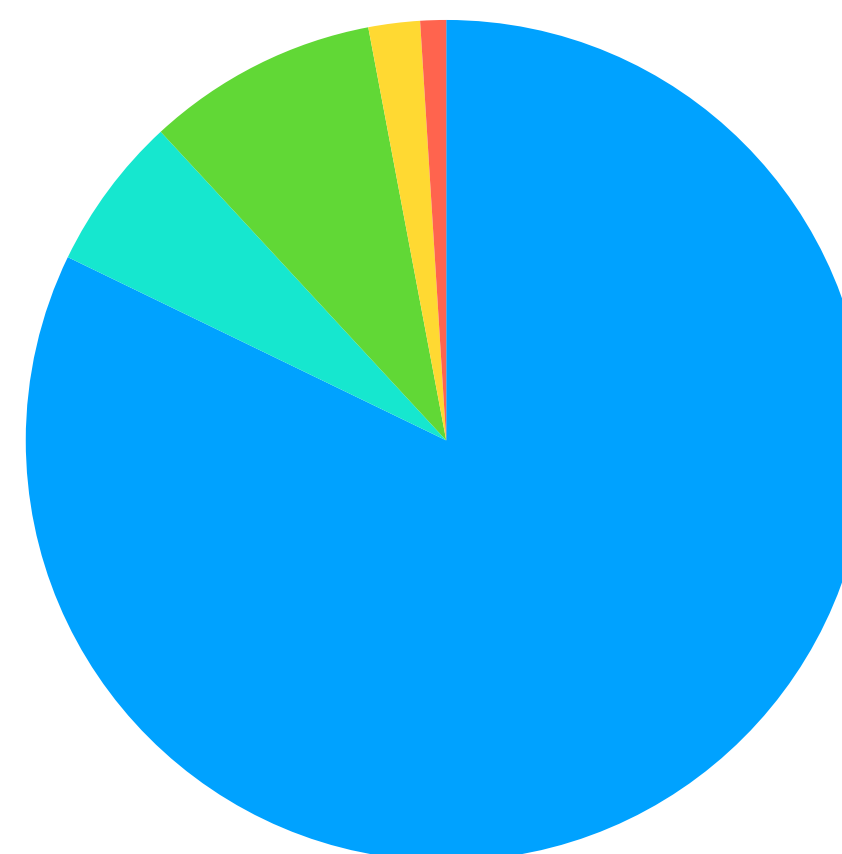
Methods

- 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.



- not informed
- instrumentation used if needed
- instruments used to help baby to come out
- knows from personal experience, not aware of risk of tear
- knows from personal experience, also had OASIS

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.