



Master in Evidence-Based Practice e Metodologia della Ricerca Clinico-assistenziale



Centro Studi EBN

Azienda Ospedaliero - Universitaria di Bologna

Policlinico S. Orsola - Malpighi

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In collaboration:

The Joanna Briggs Institute - Australia - Tiffany Conroy

Thames Valley University, a Collaborating Centre of the Joanna Briggs Institute - Carol Pellowe

PROTOCOL

AUTHOR INFORMATION:

Primary Reviewer ELENA TARLAZZI

Secondary Reviewer BARBARA LOGLISCI

REVIEW TITLE

Sexual activity at term of pregnancy and spontaneous induction of labour. A systematic review.

REVIEW QUESTION

The quantitative objective is to identify the effectiveness of regular sexual activity at term of pregnancy on spontaneous labour induction.

More specifically, the objectives are to identify :

The effectiveness of regular sexual activity at term of pregnancy on favouring the spontaneous beginning of labour in women at term of a physiological pregnancy

REVIEW INSTRUMENT: MASTARI

BACKGROUND

Post term pregnancy (>42weeks) is an anxious event for the women. In obstetric it is quite common to encourage the woman in having a regular sexual activity at term of pregnancy to induce a spontaneous labour even if the action of sexual intercourse in stimulating labour is unclear (Tan. 2006). The stimulating effect can be due to the physical stimulation of the lower uterine segment, or endogenous release of oxytocin as a result of orgasm or from the direct action of prostaglandins in semen (Benvold. 1987).

In 2001 The Cochrane collaboration published a review on this argument that was not conclusive, because based on a small single study (28 women).

Since now some new articles appeared on this argument. The aim of this work is to understand if something conclusive can be said on the role of sexual activity at term of pregnancy in inducing spontaneous labour, because it's a non medical/pharmacological method of induction that gives great control to the women over the process of inducing labour.

Our research in databases will start from 2001 because we don't need to go back to the work the Cochrane reviewer had done.

It is considered at term a pregnancy from 36 weeks and post term after 42 weeks. In Italy, doctors use to induce labour between 41 to 42 weeks.

INCLUSION CRITERIA

Types of Participants: The quantitative component of this review will consider studies that include women at term of a physiological pregnancy (> 36 week).

Types of Intervention(s)-(phenomena of interest): The quantitative component of the review will consider studies that evaluate regular sexual activity at term of pregnancy (from 36 week).

Quantitative (use for module2):

Type of Outcomes (if any): This review will consider studies that include the following outcome measures: percentage of spontaneous labour beginning before 42 week, percentage of medical induction for post term pregnancy.

Types of Studies: The quantitative component of the review will consider any randomised controlled trials; in the absence of RCTs other research designs, such as non-randomised controlled trials and before and after studies, will be considered for inclusion in a narrative summary to enable the identification of current best evidence regarding sexual activity at term of pregnancy as a way to induce labour spontaneously.

SEARCH STRATEGY

The search strategy aims to find published studies. A three-step search strategy will be utilised in each component of this review. An initial limited search of MEDLINE and CINAHL will be undertaken followed by analysis of the text words contained in the title and abstract, and of the index terms used to describe article. A second search using all identified keywords and index terms will then be undertaken across all included databases. Thirdly, the reference list of all identified reports and articles will be searched for additional studies.

The databases to be searched include:

Medline, Chinal, Midirs, Embase, Tripdatabase

Years 2001 till now

Languages: Italian, English, French, German, Spanish

Initial keywords to be used will be:

- sexual activity and labour
- coitus and labour
- coitus and delivery
- pregnancy and sexual activity and delivery

ASSESSMENT OF METHODOLOGICAL QUALITY

Quantitative papers selected for retrieval will be assessed by two independent reviewers for methodological validity prior to inclusion in the review using standardised critical appraisal instruments from the Joanna Briggs Institute Meta Analysis of Statistics Assessment and Review Instrument (JBI-MAStARI) (Appendix V).*

*Any disagreements that arise between the reviewers will be resolved through discussion, or with a third reviewer.

DATA COLLECTION

Quantitative data will be extracted from papers included in the review using the standardised data extraction tool from JBI-MAStARI (Appendix VI).*

*The data extracted will include specific details about the interventions, populations, study methods and outcomes of significance to the review question and specific objectives.

DATA SYNTHESIS

Quantitative papers will, where possible be pooled in statistical meta-analysis using the Joanna Briggs Institute Meta Analysis of Statistics Assessment and Review Instrument (JBI-MAStARI). All results will be subject to double data entry. Odds ratio (for categorical data) and weighted mean differences (for continuous data) and their 95% confidence intervals will be calculated for analysis. Heterogeneity will be assessed using the standard Chi-square. Where statistical pooling is not possible the findings will be presented in narrative form.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Any conflicts of interest.