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Warm tub bath during labor. A study of 1385 women with prelabor rupture of the membranes after 34 weeks of gestation.

Eriksson M, Ladfors L, Mattsson LA, Fall O.

Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, East Hospital, University of Göteborg, Sweden.

Abstract

BACKGROUND: To evaluate the influence of a bath on infectious morbidity in mothers and neonates in women with prelabor rupture of the membranes after 34 weeks of gestation.

METHODS: A nonrandomized study of 1385 healthy women. During the first stage of labor 538 women wanted a bath while 847 did not. The women awaited spontaneous contractions up to 24 or 72 hours after the membranes had ruptured before labor was induced with oxytocin. Digital examinations of the cervix were avoided until onset of active labor or until the time induction was planned. For statistical analysis Fisher's exact test was used.

RESULTS: Chorioamnionitis during labor occurred in 1.1% of the women in the bath group and in 0.2% in the reference group ($p = 0.06$). Postpartum endometritis was found in three cases both in the bath group (0.6%) and in the reference group (0.4%) ($p = 0.68$). The frequency of neonates receiving antibiotics was 3.7% and 4.8% respectively ($p = 0.43$).

CONCLUSION: A tub bath did not increase the risk of maternal or neonatal infection after premature rupture of the membranes and prolonged latency.

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Publication Types, MeSH Terms

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