WHO recommendations on interventions to improve preterm birth outcomes
The primary audience for this guideline includes health-care professionals who are responsible for developing national and local health-care protocols and policies, as well as managers of maternal and child health programmes and policy-makers in all settings. The guideline will also be useful to those directly providing care to pregnant women and preterm infants, such as obstetricians, paediatricians, midwives, nurses and general practitioners. The information in this guideline will be useful for developing job aids and tools for pre- and in-service training of health workers to enhance their delivery of maternal and neonatal care relating to preterm birth.

Recommendations

Maternal interventions

Antenatal corticosteroids to improve newborn outcomes

WHO recommendation on antenatal corticosteroid therapy for women at risk of preterm birth from 24 weeks to 34 weeks of gestation
Published November 2015

WHO recommendation on antenatal corticosteroid administration when preterm birth is considered imminent within 7 days of starting treatment, including within the first 24 hours
Published November 2015

WHO recommendation on antenatal corticosteroid therapy for women at risk preterm birth with a single or multiple pregnancy
Published November 2015

WHO recommendation on antenatal corticosteroid therapy in women with preterm prelabour rupture of membranes
Published November 2015

WHO recommendation on antenatal corticosteroid therapy in women with chorioamnionitis at risk of preterm birth
Published November 2015

WHO recommendation on antenatal corticosteroid therapy in women undergoing planned caesarean section at late preterm gestations (34–36+6 weeks)
Published November 2015

WHO recommendation on antenatal corticosteroid therapy in women with hypertensive disorders at risk of preterm birth
Published November 2015

**WHO recommendation on antenatal corticosteroid therapy for women at risk of preterm birth of a growth-restricted fetus**

Published November 2015

**WHO recommendation on antenatal corticosteroid therapy for women with pre-gestational and gestational diabetes at risk of preterm birth**

Published November 2015

**WHO recommendation on use of either dexamethasone or betamethasone as the antenatal corticosteroid of choice**

Published November 2015

**WHO recommendation on use of a single repeat course of antenatal corticosteroid**

Published November 2015

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**Tocolytics for inhibiting preterm labour**

**WHO recommendation on the use of tocolytic treatment for inhibiting preterm labour**

Published November 2015

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**Magnesium sulfate for fetal protection against neurological complications**

**WHO recommendation on the use of magnesium sulfate for fetal protection from neurological complications**

Published November 2015

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**Antibiotics for preterm labour**

**WHO recommendation on routine antibiotic administration for women in preterm labour with intact amniotic membranes**

Published November 2015

**WHO recommendation on antibiotic administration for women with preterm prelabour rupture of membranes**

Published November 2015

**WHO recommendation on the prophylactic antibiotic of choice in women with preterm prelabour rupture of membranes**

Published November 2015
Mode of delivery

WHO recommendation on the optimal mode of birth for women in refractory preterm labour
Published November 2015

Newborn interventions

Thermal care for preterm newborns

WHO recommendation on provision of continuous Kangaroo mother care for preterm newborns
Published November 2015

WHO recommendation on intermittent Kangaroo mother care for preterm neonates, if continuous Kangaroo mother care is not possible
Published November 2015

WHO recommendation on provision of care in a thermo-neutral environment for newborns who cannot be given Kangaroo mother care
Published November 2015

WHO recommendation on effectiveness of plastic bags/wraps in providing thermal care for preterm newborns immediately after birth
Published November 2015

Continuous positive airway pressure for newborns with respiratory distress syndrome

WHO recommendation on continuous positive airway pressure therapy for the treatment of preterm newborns with respiratory distress syndrome
Published November 2015

WHO recommendation on the time for starting continuous positive airway pressure therapy for newborns with respiratory distress syndrome
Published November 2015

Surfactant administration for newborns with respiratory distress syndrome

WHO recommendation on surfactant replacement therapy for newborns with respiratory distress syndrome
Published November 2015