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WHO recommendations for prevention and treatment of maternal peripartum infections

April 2016

The primary audience for this guideline is health professionals who are responsible for developing national and local health 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, including obstetricians, midwives, nurses and general practitioners. The information in this guideline will be useful for developing job aids and tools for both pre- and inservice training of health workers to enhance their delivery of care to prevent and treat maternal peripartum infections.

WHO Recommendations

WHO recommendation against routine perineal/pubic shaving prior to giving vaginal birth
Updated: September 2015

WHO recommendation on digital vaginal examination at intervals of four hours for routine assessment of active first stage of labour in low-risk women
Updated: September 2015

WHO recommendation against routine vaginal cleansing with chlorhexidine during labour for the purpose of preventing infectious morbidities
WHO recommendation against routine vaginal cleansing with chlorhexidine during labour in women with group B Streptococcus (GBS) colonization for prevention of early neonatal GBS infection.

Updated: September 2015

WHO recommendation on intrapartum antibiotic administration to women with group B Streptococcus (GBS) colonization for prevention of early neonatal GBS infection.

Updated: September 2015

WHO recommendation against routine antibiotic prophylaxis during the second or third trimester to all women with the aim of reducing infectious morbidity

Updated: September 2015

WHO recommendation against routine antibiotic administration for women in preterm labour with intact amniotic membranes.

Updated: September 2015

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

Updated: September 2015

WHO recommendation against routine antibiotic administration for women with prelabour rupture of membranes at (or near) term

Updated: September 2015

WHO recommendation against routine antibiotic administration for women with meconium-stained amniotic fluid

Updated: September 2015

WHO recommendation on routine antibiotic prophylaxis for women undergoing manual removal of the placenta

Updated: September 2015

WHO recommendation against routine antibiotic prophylaxis for women undergoing operative vaginal birth

Updated: September 2015

WHO recommendation on routine antibiotic prophylaxis for women with third- or fourth-degree perineal tear

Updated: September 2015

WHO recommendation against routine antibiotic prophylaxis for women with episiotomy

Updated: September 2015

WHO recommendation against routine antibiotic prophylaxis for women with uncomplicated vaginal birth
WHO recommendation on vaginal cleansing with povidone-iodine immediately before caesarean section

WHO recommendation on choice of an antiseptic agent and its method of application for skin preparation prior to caesarean section

WHO recommendation on routine antibiotic prophylaxis for women undergoing elective or emergency caesarean section

WHO recommendation on administration of prophylactic antibiotics prior to skin incision, rather than intraoperatively after umbilical cord clamping, for caesarean section

WHO recommendation on antibiotic prophylaxis for caesarean section using a single dose of first generation cephalosporin or penicillin in preference to other classes of antibiotics

WHO recommendation on a simple regimen such as ampicillin and once-daily gentamicin as first-line antibiotics for the treatment of chorioamnionitis

WHO recommendation on a combination of clindamycin and gentamicin for the treatment of postpartum endometritis

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