



“IMPACT OF EPISIOTOMY ON WOMEN'S HEALTH AND USES OF ALTERNATIVE THERAPIES FOR EPISIOTOMY”

Nursing

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ABSTRACT

The episiotomy procedure was first described in 1742; it subsequently gained widespread acceptance, peaking in the 1920s. Its reported benefits included preservation of the integrity of the pelvic floor and prevention of uterine prolapse and other vaginal trauma. Since the 1920s, the number of women who receive an episiotomy during their delivery has steadily declined. In modern obstetrics, episiotomy is not routinely performed. However, in certain circumstances and when performed by a skilled physician, episiotomy may be beneficial.

KEYWORDS

Episiotomy, Sitz bath, Witch hazel, Kegel

Introduction:

Pregnancy and labor can induce a lot of stress and pain in a woman, and one of them is to undergo an episiotomy, a cut or an incision made from the vagina to the rectum of a woman during the second stage of labor during a vaginal birth. During labor, the uterus contracts itself to allow the baby to come out through the vaginal opening. However, there can be times when a doctor or the healthcare staff might need to make an incision to make the vaginal opening a little larger to ensure smooth delivery. Episiotomy could be painful and a little difficult to deal with postpartum.

Purposes:

Evidence of maternal or fetal distress (i.e. No time to allow perineum to stretch).

The baby is premature or in breech position

Large /big size baby

Instrumental delivery (forceps or vacuum).

The mother is too tired or unable to push.

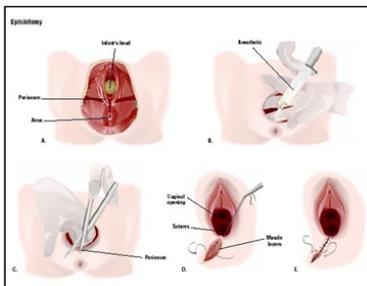
Existing trauma to the perineum.

- Scarring of the perineum.

Classification:

Episiotomies are classified according to the depth of the incision:

- **A first-degree episiotomy:** cuts through skin only.
- **A second-degree episiotomy:** involves skin and muscle and extends midway between the vagina and the anus.
- **A third-degree episiotomy:** cuts through skin, muscle, and the rectal sphincter.
- **A fourth-degree episiotomy:** extends through the rectum and cuts through skin, muscle, the rectal sphincter, and anal wall.



During childbirth, the area called the perineum is often cut to facilitate delivery (A). First, a local anesthetic may be given (B). The perineum is cut on an angle with scissors (C). After delivery, the layers of muscle and skin are repaired (D and E).

Episiotomy: Treatment and Care

After episiotomy for joints can be used from a yarn of two types:

- Absorbable sutures (Vicryl, catgut);
- Silk threads, which are taken from 5 to 7 day.

Stitches of episiotomy require care. In the hospital has been treating obstetrician. For the seams of the perineum, labia 1 time per day used Zelenka or hydrogen peroxide. Sometimes use cream “Traumeel S” or

a solution of potassium permanganate. After the hospital care of the seams will be independent.

It is important to maintain perfect hygiene. Every 2 hours should change pads. Patient can rinse the seams decoction-based antiseptic calendula and chamomile. After using the toilet do not forget to wash away the crotch front to back running water. After cleaning the need to get wet and dry surface.

Should abide by the restrictions in the provisions:

- Not sit 7-10 days;
- Exercise breastfeeding, lying on its side;
- Eat standing;
- After 10 days, mother can sit on the buttock polubokom without cutting.

To prevent violations of joints is important to follow a diet that prevents constipation. Sometimes it is necessary laxative, combined with breastfeeding.

Aftercare:

The area of the episiotomy may be uncomfortable or even painful for several days. Several practices can relieve some of the pain.

Natural ways to heal the episiotomy:

1. **Sitz bath:** A sitz bath after an episiotomy is like a spa for your bum. Sitz baths are warm shallow baths that cleanse the perineal area. Sitz baths can help relieve pain and itching. Make sure that where ever patients do her sitz bath that it's sanitized properly. When doing a sitz bath patient can sit in shallow tub, or get a sitz bath kit which fits inside the toilet. Once this is done, patient can soak in her sitz bath for 15-20 minutes. After that patient are done soaking make sure that patient pat (not rub) the area dry. Sitz baths are perfect for episiotomies because doing them have very little side effects or risks. Patient gives herself this spa like treatment 2-3 times a day after giving birth.
2. **Keep the area clean and dry:** Remember, the vaginal area is supposed to be self-lubricating. This is a little worrisome as that can lead to bacterial build-up in the area and lead to infection or set-up a stage for one. So use cotton towels to wipe clean the area from back to front cautiously after each time patient use the rest room to release herself. If patient feel moist down there, go to the wash room, wash the area and wipe it clean again. Use a dry towel for this each time.
3. **Allow fresh air in:** Now the episiotomy wound needs some fresh air too. But this isn't possible throughout the day so at night try sleeping without patient innerwear. This will serve as an inlet of fresh air for patient wound and help it heal faster.
4. **Take the medicines on time:** One thing that can save mother from the aches and pain of an episiotomy is the timely medications as advised by the doctor which is usually a paracetamol. But beware of over-the-counter medications post delivery as they could lead to other consequences.
5. **Be cautious while moving around:** Take extreme care while sitting and getting up from a chair. As any force exerted could send out stinging pain in the vaginal area which could make it worse.

Always lower the mother knees first before she try to sit and then rest her bottoms, while getting up do it in a slow motion manner. If sitting for too long makes the mother uncomfortable, use a cushion to counter the soreness.

6. **Use sanitary pads:** Even if lochia or vaginal bleeding stops before the wound heals, still use sanitary napkins. This will help to absorb blood if the wound starts bleeding and save mother from the stains in her underwear.
7. **Keep nails short**
8. **Use an ice pack:** Cold packs have always been a good way to deal with surgical wounds, especially in the private areas. In case using an ice pack becomes too cumbersome, opt for the chilled hazel pads and place them on a sanitary napkin and put them on. This will help mother soothe the wound faster.
9. **Freezing Maxi Pads:** This will be provided with perineal cold pack pads. These pads really help soothe the area where the episiotomy was performed. However, freezing maxi pads is another great alternative.
10. **Soothe during urination:** Urinating amidst an episiotomy wound could be painful. To reduce the pain and discomfort keep pouring warm water on the vulva while urinating.
11. **Avoid constipation:** Pressure during a bowel movement could make the wound become more painful. Watch your diet carefully and include a lot of fiber to avoid a bout of constipation. Alternatively, use a clean cloth and press on the wound while bearing down a bowel movement.
12. **Eat fiber:** If ever there was time to increase mother diet in rich foods, like full grains, fruits and vegetables, now is it. This is crucial to keeping mother bowel movements soft and easy. Stay well hydrated all helps a lot in this area. As much as possible avoid staining as that could put pressure on the wound.
13. **Witch hazel:** Witch hazel is a natural astringent that has wonderful anti-inflammatory properties. No witch hazel is not an actual witch named hazel. Witch hazel is an astringent that is derived from a flower that has anti-inflammatory properties. It is a clear liquid that can be applied to the perineum in different ways.

Mother can buy witch hazel all by itself and it applies it gently using a cotton pad. Or she can buy already pre-soaked cotton pads and use them that way. Witch hazel can also be added to mother sitz baths, or poured directly onto Mother episiotomy wound.

Witch hazel is sure to provide plenty of relief. A word of caution when purchasing witch hazel is to make sure that it contains no alcohol. Witch Hazel containing alcohol will only cause further irritation to the episiotomy site.

14. **Kegel:** KEGELS are the one exercise that woman's are ok to do right from the start. The advantage of a kegel is that the woman immediately increases the blood flow to the pelvic floor. This is really important, as the increase blood flow will bring nutrients and oxygen for healing.
15. **Relax and move gently**
16. **Heal emotionally**
17. **Anesthetic Pain Spray:** Anesthetic pain spray is that it numbs the perineal area. This area is very sore after giving birth, especially after receiving an episiotomy. Another great thing about anesthetic pain spray is it lessens contact with the healing area. This will help prevent possible infections because the just spray it on the perineum. Most anesthetic spray also contains anti-itch formulas that moisturize. This is because these types of sprays contain benzocaine, which numbs. Benzocaine is also used throat medicine and teething gel. Mother can find anesthetic pain spray at drugs stores and pharmacies.
18. **Sunlight:** The ancient Egyptians were the first civilization to discover the profound healing power of the sun. Twenty minutes of direct sunlight exposure to the perineum daily post birth will dramatically promote wound healing.
19. **Aloe Vera:** Aloe Vera is well known for its cooling, analgesic, wound healing qualities and is especially effective for treating third degree tears. If patient have an Aloe Vera cactus growing in her garden break a leaf and a gel will be released. Apply gel by spreading it onto patient sanitary pad. For those women concerned about infection, pure Aloe Vera cream can be purchased from the local health food store.
20. **Raw honey:** Unprocessed, raw, organic honey (Manuka honey is the best) is also an excellent home remedy for third degree tears. Apply approximately 1 tablespoon directly to the affected area or

smear it onto a sanitary pad. The thick consistency of honey forms a physical barrier to prevent underwear from sticking to the wound and prevents infection. Even if a scab has already formed the moistness of the honey will help the skin cells to grow and prevent scarring.

Prevention of Episiotomy:

Episiotomy in some cases can be prevented. We must follow a few guidelines:

- Kegel exercises (up to 3 times a day);
- Perineal massage with oil of wheat germ;
- Yoga for pregnant or exercises for intimate muscles
- Prenatal lacto-vegetarian diet to improve tissue elasticity;
- Relaxation techniques during labor (to cope with muscle spasms)

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