

A-07: Opinion of patients on perineal shaving in labour

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Perineal shaving is an old routine procedure in preparation of patients for labour. This study was done, to find out opinions of patients on perineal shaving as this practice has been abandoned by developed countries many years ago. 210 consecutive patients who delivered at the Teaching Hospital Peradeniya in July 1993 following spontaneous labour 101 (48.1%) or induction 109 (51.9%) were studied. 205 (97.6%) had their perineum shaved, but 101 (49.2%) of them did not approve it. Percentages of patients in different categories who did not like perineal shaving were: Ethnicity - Sinhalese 44.1%, Tamils 69.2%, Muslims 77.3%, Age 16-20 yrs 100%, 21-25 yrs 60.0%, 26-30 yrs 35.6%, 31-35 yrs 34.2%, 36-40 yrs 57.1%, more than 41 yrs 33.3%, Parity - one 56.5%, two 44.3%, three 37.5%, four 50%, over five 46.7%. Of the 176 patients who had shaving and vaginal delivery 71 (40.3%) did not have an episiotomy. Of these 71, 29 (40.8%) did not like it. All patients who delivered by Caesarean (29), had their perineum unnecessarily shaved and 41.4% of them did not approve it, 101 women did not like shaving for the following reasons: shyness 93 (92.1%), pain or discomfort 84 (83.2%) and thought unnecessary 32 (31.7%). This study shows that many women do not agree with the perineal shaving as a preparation for labour. As it has been shown that perineal shaving has no practical value, this practice should be reviewed and possibly abandoned.