

Comparison: Companionship during labour and childbirth compared with usual practice

Source: Bohren MA, Hofmeyr G, Sakala C, Fukuzawa RK, Cuthbert A. Continuous support for women during childbirth. Cochrane Database Syst Rev. 2017;(7):CD003766.

No. of studies	Study design	Quality assessment					Other considerations	No. of participants		Effect		Certainty (GRADE)	Importance
		Risk of bias	Inconsistency	Indirectness	Imprecision			Companionship during labour and childbirth	Usual practice	Relative (95% CI)	Absolute (95% CI)		
Spontaneous vaginal birth													
21	RCTs	serious ^a	not serious	not serious	not serious	publication bias strongly suspected ^b	5092/7153 (71.2%)	4898/7216 (67.9%)	RR 1.08 (1.04-1.12)	54 more per 1000 (from 27 more to 81 more)	⊕⊕○○ LOW	critical	
Caesarean birth													
24	RCTs	not serious	not serious	serious ^a	not serious	publication bias strongly suspected ^b	948/7663 (12.4%)	1120/7684 (14.6%)	RR 0.75 (0.64-0.88)	36 fewer per 1000 (from 17 fewer to 52 fewer)	⊕⊕○○ LOW	critical	
Instrumental vaginal birth													
19	RCTs	not serious	not serious	serious ^a	not serious	publication bias strongly suspected ^b	1283/7028 (18.3%)	1420/7090 (20.0%)	RR 0.90 (0.85-0.96)	20 fewer per 1000 (from 8 fewer to 30 fewer)	⊕⊕○○ LOW	critical	
Perineal trauma													
4	RCTs	not serious	not serious	serious ^c	not serious	none	2339/4057 (57.7%)	2396/4063 (59.0%)	RR 0.97 (0.92-1.01)	18 fewer per 1000 (from 6 more to 47 fewer)	⊕⊕⊕○ MODERATE	critical	
Labour length													
13	RCTs	not serious	not serious	not serious	not serious	publication bias strongly suspected ^b	2732	2697	-	MD 0.69 lower (1.04 lower to 0.34 lower)	⊕⊕⊕○ MODERATE	critical	
Any analgesia/anaesthesia													
15	RCTs	not serious	not serious	serious ^a	not serious	publication bias strongly suspected ^b	4455/6173 (72.2%)	4699/6260 (75.1%)	RR 0.90 (0.84-0.96)	75 fewer per 1000 (from 30 fewer to 120 fewer)	⊕⊕○○ LOW	critical	

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		Risk of bias	Inconsistency	Indirectness	Imprecision	Other considerations	Companionship during labour and childbirth	Usual practice	Relative (95% CI)	Absolute (95% CI)		
Regional analgesia/anaesthesia												
9	RCTs	not serious	serious ^c	serious ^a	not serious	none	3760/5727 (65.7%)	3959/5717 (69.2%)	RR 0.93 (0.88–0.99)	48 fewer per 1000 (from 7 fewer to 83 fewer)	⊕⊕○○ LOW	critical
Synthetic oxytocin during labour												
17	RCTs	not serious	not serious	serious ^a	not serious	publication bias strongly suspected ^b	2375/6383 (37.2%)	2343/6450 (36.3%)	RR 0.97 (0.91–1.03)	11 fewer per 1000 (from 11 more to 33 fewer)	⊕⊕○○ LOW	critical
Negative rating of/negative feelings about birth experience												
11	RCTs	not serious	not serious	not serious	not serious	publication bias strongly suspected ^b	653/5583 (11.7%)	982/5550 (17.7%)	RR 0.69 (0.59–0.79)	55 fewer per 1000 (from 37 fewer to 73 fewer)	⊕⊕⊕○ MODERATE	critical
Postpartum report of severe labour pain												
4	RCTs	not serious	serious ^c	not serious	not serious	none	532/1223 (43.5%)	516/1233 (41.8%)	RR 1.00 (0.83–1.21)	0 fewer per 1000 (from 71 fewer to 88 more)	⊕⊕⊕○ MODERATE	critical
Low 5-minute Apgar score												
14	RCTs	serious ^d	not serious	not serious	not serious	none	62/6327 (1.0%)	99/6288 (1.6%)	RR 0.62 (0.46–0.85)	6 fewer per 1000 (from 2 fewer to 9 fewer)	⊕⊕⊕○ MODERATE	critical
Exclusive or any breastfeeding at any time point, as defined by trial authors												
4	RCTs	not serious	serious ^c	serious ^a	not serious	none	1707/2855 (59.8%)	1639/2729 (60.1%)	RR 1.05 (0.96–1.16)	30 more per 1000 (from 24 fewer to 96 more)	⊕⊕○○ LOW	critical

CI: confidence interval; MD: mean difference; RCT: randomized controlled trial; RR: risk ratio. RR: relative risk.

^a Hodnett 2002 included high-risk pregnancies.

^b Evident asymmetry in funnel plot with at least 10 studies.

^c Severe, unexplained heterogeneity ($I^2 \geq 60\%$ or $\text{Chi}^2 < 0.05$).

^d Most of the pooled effect derived from studies with moderate or high risk of bias but without a substantial proportion (i.e. < 50%) from studies with high risk of bias.

^e Most of the pooled effect derived from studies with moderate or high risk of bias but with a substantial proportion (i.e. > 50%) from studies with high risk of bias.

^f The CI is imprecise.