

Comparison 3: "Hands-off" compared with "hands-on" perineum approach

Source: Aasheim V, Nilsen A, Reinar L, Lukasse M. Perineal techniques during the second stage of labour for reducing perineal trauma. Cochrane Database Syst Rev. 2017;(6):CD006672.

No. of studies	Study design	Quality assessment					No. of participants		Effect		Certainty (GRADE)	Importance
		Risk of bias	Inconsistency	Indirectness	Imprecision	Other considerations	15 1) Hands off (or poised)	Hands on	Relative (95% CI)	Absolute (95% CI)		
Intact perineum												
2	RCTs	serious ^c	not serious	not serious	not serious	none	1158/3242 (35.7%)	1169/3305 (35.4%)	RR 1.03 (0.95-1.12)	11 more per 1000 (from 18 fewer to 42 more)	⊕⊕⊕○ MODERATE	critical
Third- or fourth-degree tears												
5	RCTs	very serious ^d	serious ^b	not serious	serious ^a	none	49/3627 (1.4%)	55/3690 (1.5%)	RR 0.68 (0.21-2.26)	5 fewer per 1000 (from 12 fewer to 19 more)	⊕○○○ VERY LOW	critical
First-degree tear												
2	RCTs	not serious	not serious	not serious	serious ^a	none	83/350 (23.7%)	63/350 (18.0%)	RR 1.32 (0.99-1.77)	58 more per 1000 (from 2 fewer to 139 more)	⊕⊕○○ LOW	critical
Second-degree tear												
2	RCTs	very serious ^d	not serious	not serious	serious	none	23/350 (6.6%)	30/350 (8.6%)	RR 0.77 (0.47-1.28)	20 fewer per 1000 (from 24 more to 45 fewer)	⊕○○○ VERY LOW	critical
Episiotomy												
4	RCTs	very serious ^c	serious ^b	not serious	not serious	none	368/3592 (10.2%)	534/3655 (14.6%)	RR 0.58 (0.43-0.79)	61 fewer per 1000 (from 31 fewer to 83 fewer)	⊕⊕○○ LOW	critical

CI: confidence interval; RCT: randomized controlled trial; RR: risk ratio.

^a Wide confidence interval crossing the line of no effect.

^b Severe unexplained heterogeneity.

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

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