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### Antenatal exercises and labor outcomes

**Background:** Women's health issues have attained higher international visibility and renewed political commitment in recent decades. Safe maternity with improved neonatal outcomes is predicted on proper antenatal services. Pregnancy exercise relieves the discomfort experienced by pregnant women and to help them prepare the body for and easier delivery and recovery process. Researchers have reported that women's education is a central determinant of maternal and childbirth.

**Aim:** To determine the effectiveness of selected antenatal exercises on labor outcome in terms of maternal and fetal wellbeing among primigravid women.

**Methods:** A quasi-experimental study was conducted in one of the Maternity Hospital of Karnataka, India with 600 primigravid women (300 each in experimental and control group). Education on antenatal exercises provided with the help of 3D animation and the practice was monitored. Maternal outcomes assessed in terms of pain, progress of labor, mode of delivery, duration of labor and condition of perineum. Fetal outcomes assessed in terms of fetal distress, asphyxia neonatorum and birth trauma. Chi-square analysis was applied for comparing the groups.

**Results:** The primigravid women performed exercise for a minimum of 15 to a maximum of 34 days. Chi-square value shows there is difference in the maternal and fetal outcomes in both the groups and which is statistically significant. Experimental group women had better pain bearing capacity than control group ( $p < 0.000$ ), duration of labor in experimental group was shorter ( $p < 0.000$ ), number of assisted deliveries, perineal tear and episiotomy were lesser in experimental group ( $p < 0.000$ ). There was difference in Fetal outcomes (fetal distress, asphyxia, neonatorum and birth trauma) in both the groups, which was also statistically significant at ( $p < 0.001$ ).

**Conclusion:** Selected approved antenatal teaching exercises at the time of delivery comforts the women by helping the women to bare the pain threshold, cope up with contraction, move for good progression of labor and promote the fetal wellbeing. The responsibility of educating is in the hands of the health care personnel.

### Biography

Emi John Prince is an Associate Professor and has completed her PhD in Nursing Science from Vinayaka Missions University, Tamil Nadu. She is nationally and internationally recognized in the areas of Maternity Nursing. She is the Course Coordinator for Postgraduate studies in Nursing at Institute of Health and Management at NSW. As a Midwife, she works part time at Royal Brisbane Hospital, Brisbane. Her research and scholarly pursuits are in the areas of maternal health and women's health. She has published her work widely and has written many articles. She is also actively involved in extended professional role as External Examiner (Adjudicator) for PhD thesis for many of the universities.

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