



Sterile water injections as treatment for low-back pain during labour: A review

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Abstract

Background: Some women have severe low-back pain during childbirth. It has been shown that sterile water injections reduce this pain. This method, which is easy to learn and very cheap can be a good pain relief alternative primarily in countries with limited available pain relief options.

Aims: The aim of this article was to describe published research concerning sterile water injections for treatment of low-back pain during labour.

Methods: Three databases were searched from their inception until February 2008. The inclusion criteria were trials elucidating the pain relief effect of sterile water injections during childbirth. The search terms were labour, birth, obstetrics, parturient, pregnancy, pain relief, analgesia, injection, papules, blocks and sterile water. The computerised literature searches yielded 64 trials, 55 of which failed to meet our inclusion criteria. We used the Jadad Score Instrument to assess the quality of the remaining nine articles, of which six were of adequate quality.

Results: All studies in this review had similar aims, designs and measurement instruments and they reported good pain relief particularly for low-back pain during childbirth. In all studies the pain score reduction is approximately 60% and the effect remains up to two hours.

Conclusions: Sterile water injections seem to be a good alternative for low-back pain during childbirth.