

Effects of Delayed Pushing During Second Stage of Labor on Maternal Exhaustion and Bonding in Early Postpartum

Abstract

This project studied the effects of delayed pushing during the second stage of labor on postpartum fatigue, maternal bonding and readiness to take care of their newborns, as well as birthing mothers' satisfaction of their birth experience. Data were collected from postpartum women who volunteered to participate through answering survey questions during their initial postpartum visits. They were between 38 to 42 weeks of gestation when delivered, had uncomplicated pregnancies, did not receive epidural analgesia during labor, and had uncomplicated vaginal deliveries managed by the board-certified nurse midwives in the birthing center. After cervical dilation completed, pushing delayed until the laboring women felt a strong physical pushing reflex and they pushed in the position and the way that was more comfortable for them. The birth outcomes were assessed based on the participants' answers to the questions rating their fatigue, exhaustion, and readiness to take care of their newborns within the first 24 hours after the birth. Other related supplementary data including Apgar score, existing perineal laceration, maternal pain level and discomfort after birth, or any other maternal/neonatal complications were collected by reviewing the certified nurse midwives' progress or delivery notes. Of all participants, 84% were highly satisfied with their birth experience, there were no significant maternal or neonatal complications as stated by the certified nurse midwives. Results of the project provided valuable insights such as delayed pushing resulted in reduced maternal fatigue, improved maternal bonding, readiness to breastfeed as well as provide care to newborns within the first 24 hours after childbirth.