

Childbirth Connection: Helping Women and Health Professionals Make Informed Maternity Care Decisions

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National Health Policy Forum

**Exploring Comparativeness Effectiveness:
Fundamentals of Evidence-Based Health
and Introduction to the Cochrane Collaboration
July 25, 2008**



Childbirth Connection

- Founded in 1918 as Maternity Center Association to reduce maternal and infant mortality in New York City
- Mission to improve the quality of maternity care through research, education, advocacy and policy
- Focus on safe, effective and satisfying evidence-based maternity care for all women and families
- www.childbirthconnection.org

Improving Maternity Care in the 21st Century

- Assessed contemporary maternity services using the Cochrane database of systematic reviews to clarify best evidence about care for pregnancy and childbirth
- *Effective Care in Pregnancy and Childbirth, A Guide to Effective Care in Pregnancy and Childbirth, and Oxford Database of Perinatal Trials (forerunner of Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews)*

Improving Maternity Care in the 21st Century

- Cochrane Collaboration has made unparalleled contributions to answering the question: “What works better, for whom, provided by whom, and in what setting?”
- Other sources of best evidence including AHRQ, NIH, NLM, DARE, NICE

Improving Maternity Care in the 21st Century

- Results of best evidence not translated into practice
- Launched a long-term national program to promote evidence-based maternity care in 1999

Evidence-Based Maternity Care Program

- Award-winning website for women and health professionals:
- Provides information about the effects of maternity interventions
- Supports professionals who want to provide evidence-based maternity care
- Encourages pregnant women to make informed decisions
- Encourages women to seek caregivers and care settings with a commitment to evidence-based maternity care.

Evidence-Based Maternity Care

"Evidence-based maternity care" means using results of the best research about the safety and effectiveness of specific tests, treatments, and other interventions to help guide maternity care decisions.



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[A Guide to Effective Care in Pregnancy and Childbirth](#)



For Women

Childbirth Connection, formerly Maternity Center Association, is a not-for-profit organization that has worked to improve the quality of maternity care for mothers, babies and families since 1918. We promote safe, effective, and satisfying evidence-based maternity care. Evidence-based maternity care means using the best research about the safety and effectiveness of specific tests, treatments, and interventions to help you make informed decisions.

Our evidence-based information, guidance, and support will show you how to maintain and enhance your health and the health of your baby. You will learn to use this information to make informed decisions. Your choices, when based on the best available research and your values and preferences, can lead to a healthy birth outcome, a strong and connected family, and a confident approach to parenthood.



[Inside For Women Pregnancy Topics](#)

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Join Our New Maternity Quality Matters Campaign!



If mothers and babies matter to you, Maternity Quality Matters and so does your support. Please join our efforts to make quality maternity

care a top national priority.

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National Perinatal Performance Measures

The National Quality Forum has recently released its draft report with a proposed measure set and priorities for additional measures. Public reporting of performance can help women choose care, purchasers buy services, and providers improve quality.





for Health Professionals



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Evidence-Based Maternity Care Resource Directory

Evidence Columns

Systematic Reviews

A Guide to Effective Care in Pregnancy and Childbirth

Listening to Mothers Surveys

Alerts & Responses

Pregnancy Resources for Women

The Rights of Childbearing Women



For Health Professionals

It's a challenging time to be a health professional, and especially one with responsibility for pregnant women, new mothers and babies. Health professional practice in the 21st century requires the capacity to understand, provide and foster care that is consistent with results of the best available research -- whether providing direct services, setting policy, conducting research, or educating professionals and childbearing women themselves. A vast continually evolving literature of uneven quality poses major challenges for busy professionals.



Childbirth Connection and this website are ready to lend a hand. Resources here can help maternity professionals:

- ◆ stay abreast of the evolving literature and in touch with more definitive resources for guiding practice

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Helping women and health professionals make informed maternity care decisions

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A Guide to Effective Care in Pregnancy and Childbirth

A Guide to Effective Care in Pregnancy and Childbirth is an overview of results of the best available research about effects of specific maternity practices.

The book's table of contents appears below. Click on chapter titles to see the chapter outline and download a PDF of the chapter in full.

Contents

[all front matter, including preface and acknowledgements]

Basic care

- 1 What do we mean by 'effective care'? 3
2 Evaluating care in pregnancy and childbirth 5
3 Support for pregnant women 15

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Evidence-Based Maternity Care Resource Directory

- Evidence-Based Paradigm
- Critical Appraisal
- Cochrane Collaboration
- Other Sources of Better-Quality Evidence
- Clinical Guidelines & Other Policy Statements
- Searching for Evidence
- Improving Maternal & Newborn Care Practice
- Systematic Reviews for Health Practice Quality Improvement
- Overviews of Best Evidence for Improving Practice
- Acronyms

Evidence Columns

Systematic Reviews



Evidence-Based Maternity Care Resource Directory

The shift to an evidence-based framework in health care involves a profound transition in health practice. At the core of this shift are questions about what knowledge is authoritative and how to obtain and apply it. These questions are central to clinical practice, policy, research and professional education, as well as consumer education and informed decision making.

The relevant methodologies are being continually refined, and much knowledge that is worthy of informing decision making is now in hand. This is especially true for pregnancy, childbirth and neonatal care practice, which was the "test case" clinical area that ushered in the era of evidence-based practice beginning in the 1970s. Unfortunately, however, much uncertainty remains, and many mothers and babies are not reaping benefits of the knowledge that we do have.

This resource directory is provided to lend a hand to those who want to practice within this promising framework. It includes the following pages:

- ◆ [Evidence-based paradigm](#): resources about evidence-based health care

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Evidence-Based Resources

- "Current Resources for Evidence-Based Practice," a quarterly column from Childbirth Connection staff (Carol Sakala and Rima Jolivet)
- Published simultaneously since 2003 in:
JOGNN: Journal of Obstetric, Gynecologic and Neonatal Nursing

Journal of Midwifery and Women's Health

Evidence-Based Resources

- **2008 Current Evidence Columns**

- [JOGNN/JMWH March/April](#)

- Tutorial/commentary: the "disciplined subjectivity" of meta-analysis

- [JOGNN/JMWH January/February](#)

- Tutorial/commentary: comparative effectiveness and safety research

- Registered Users: 26,484
- e Newsletter Evidence Columns Subscribers: 10,740
- 83,000 visits per month

Evidence-Based Resources

- Carol Sakala, Director of Programs, Co-Author of Cochrane Review, Continuous Support During Labor
- Long-term North American sponsor of the Consumer Panel of the Cochrane Collaboration Pregnancy and Childbirth Group, which involves consumers as referees to strengthen the quality of systematic reviews.
- Active in Consumers United for Evidence-Based Healthcare (CUE)
- Participate in Cochrane Colloquia and U.S. Cochrane Center Meetings

Quotes from Mothers

Best Pregnancy Resources A-Z

Alcohol, Drug Use & Smoking

Body Awareness

Cesarean Section

Choosing a Birth Setting

Choosing a Caregiver

Dental Care and Pregnancy

Domestic Violence & Abusive Relationships

Emotions & Stress

[Evidence-Based Maternity Care / Evidence-Based Health Care](#)

Exposure Types and Effects on Pregnancy

Exercise & Fitness

Fertility & Infertility

Finances, Insurance & Maternity Leave

Food Advisories

Genetic Counseling Testing

Habits

Labor Pain

Labor Support

Other Resources Relating to Evidence-Based Maternity Care/Evidence-Based Health Care

Consumers United for Evidence-based Healthcare (CUE): CUE is a pioneering effort to improve consumers' ability to engage in and demand high quality health care. Childbirth Connection and other member organizations work in partnership with the US Cochrane Center and other scientists to strengthen the voice of consumers and provide leadership in health care research.

Video about CUE: meet CUE leaders (including Childbirth Connection Executive Director Maureen Corry) and learn: why CUE is needed, what CUE works toward and what groups are active in CUE.



Closing the Gap

- Commissioned systematic reviews to clarify best evidence on nature and management of labor pain published in *AJOG* supplement, 2002
- Conducted systematic review to compare full range of outcomes that differ between vaginal and cesarean birth, 2004
- Commissioned landmark national *Listening to Mothers* surveys (2002,2006) to illuminate women's childbearing experiences and clarify evidence-practice gaps

Closing the Gap

- Milbank Memorial Fund Report:

“Evidence-Based Maternity Care, What it is and What it Can Achieve”, Sakala and Corry,
(8/2008)

Closing the Gap

- National Quality Forum: Perinatal Performance Measures
- 90th Anniversary Symposium: Transforming Maternity Care: A High Value Proposition, April 3, 2009

Comparative Effectiveness Research

- Comparative effectiveness research including systematic reviews, RCTs, observational studies, administrative data, etc., is essential for improving the quality and value of healthcare
- Better information for better decision-making
- Transparency, relevant, readable, trustworthy, involve consumers in reviews of SRs and protocols



“The power of knowledge is an incredible thing. It enabled me to be in control of my experience instead of just participating in it. It was very freeing.”

Listening to Mothers II
survey participant