A Study of Skin-to-Skin Care During Cesarean Birth: A Mother’s Experience

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Introduction

• Skin-to-skin care (SSC) is the act of placing a naked newborn on the bare chest of the mother.
• There are numerous benefits of SSC for both mother and baby.
• This practice is standard procedure for vaginal births, but women having cesarean births are often left out.
• This study asks the question “For mothers who have received skin-to-skin care during their cesarean birth, what concerns and expectations did these women have before the skin-to-skin care experience and how were those concerns and expectations realized during the experience?”

Themes

Concerns and Expectations

• I just want to hold my baby.
  • “I want to hold my baby as soon as she’s born. I want her on me.”

Experience

• It made me okay with my cesarean birth.
  • “That initial skin-to-skin made me okay with my c-section. It made it a little less surgical…a little less clinical.”
• My baby felt safe, calm, and at home.
  • “He’d been listening to me for the last several months…and even though I’m a little blurry, he gets to see mom, and feel my touch, and I know that’s helpful for him.”

“I have nothing positive…from my first birth” but “with my second birth…I have a very positive and happy memory that has impacted my entire life.”

Methodology

• A series of interview questions were developed and validated by content experts.

• A unique recruitment and data collection method was used:
  • Recruitment of women who have experienced skin-to-skin care in the OR during their cesarean birth occurred through a Facebook page of a cesarean-awareness group.
  • Facebook Messenger was used for the consent process
  • Interviews of participants (N=13) occurred using Facebook video chat.
  • Interviews were recorded and transcribed using Rev transcription software.
  • Transcriptions were analyzed and themes were developed.

Nursing Implications

• It is important for nurses to understand the evidence behind this intervention.
• Nurses need to study and refine the process of SSC in order to better facilitate the practice.
• Nurses need to understand that SSC allows mothers to have an emotional connection with their birth in an otherwise clinical environment.

Acknowledgements

Honors Capstone Research Summer Program for funding, Dean Adams and the College of Nursing, Dean Wilkerson and the Honors College, the Community of Scholars Staff, and the women of the cesarean-awareness groups.