

*The Global Incidence of
Puerperal Sepsis
Protocol for a Systematic Review*

Dr MC Chisembele

Tutor: Dr L Say

WHO/GFMER/IAMANEH

Postgraduate Training Course in Reproductive Health

Geneva 2004

Outline

- Background
- Objective
- Methods

Background

- Sepsis is among the leading causes of preventable maternal death not only in developing countries but in developed countries as well
- It is usually reported as the third or fourth leading cause of maternal death

Background

The predisposing factors or conditions leading to the development of sepsis are quite varied and include:

- Home birth in unhygienic conditions
- Low socioeconomic status
- Anaemia
- Primiparity
- Prolonged rupture of membranes
- Prolonged labour
- Multiple vaginal examinations
- Obstetrical manoeuvres

Background

- Sepsis is an important morbid condition because of its consequences on both fetal and maternal outcomes

Background

Maternal complications include:

- Septicaemia,
- Endotoxic shock,
- Peritonitis or abscess formation leading to surgery
- Long term – future fertility

Fetal outcomes include

- A depressed five-minute Apgar score,
- Neonatal septicaemia and
- Pneumonia

Background

Definition

- 'A temperature rise above 38.0°C maintained over 24 hours or recurring during the period from the end of the 1st to the end of the 10th day after childbirth or abortion'. (ICD-10)
- 'Oral temperature of 38.0°C or more on any two of the first ten days postpartum'. (USJCMW)

Background

- There is some overlap with the definition of endometritis in others – which includes foul smelling discharge, uterine tenderness

Background

- Incidence of puerperal sepsis shows wide variations among published literature – may be related to definition, recording etc

Background

- Sepsis is an important public health problem contributing to maternal morbidity and mortality
- Most of the predisposing factors are preventable
- The global magnitude of the problem is limited hence the need for a systematic review summarizing the true extent of puerperal sepsis

Objective

To provide the incidence or prevalence data on puerperal sepsis worldwide

Methods

Types of Studies

- Any study design including cross-sectional, cohort, clinical trials, surveys having incidence or prevalence data on puerperal sepsis

Types of participants

- Women within 42 days of termination of pregnancy

Methods

Types of interventions

- None

Types of outcome measures

- Puerperal sepsis

Methods

Search strategy

- Data bases – Medline, EConlit, Biosis, EMBASE, Popline, Cinahl, Pias International, CAB, Sociofile, the gray literature database (SIGLE), Cochrane data bases
- Hand searching of journals
- Personal contacts

Will review both published and unpublished data from 1997-2002

Methods

Selection Criteria

- Study designs providing prevalence or incidence rates for any puerperal sepsis in any population

Exclusion Criteria

- Studies with no data
- Reports providing statements only but no source of data
- Reports referring to data collected before 1990
- Studies where no dates for data collection are provided

Methods

Methods of Review

- All studies identified will be assessed by titles and abstracts first
- Full text retrieval
- A data extraction form will be used to extract information such as design, population setting characteristics, follow-up, and completeness of data
- The review is expected to be completed by the end of the year.