

LOYOLA PERINATAL NETWORK NURSING e-JOURNAL CLUB
Obstetric Evidence-Based (EBP) Practice Research Article Critique Summary
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Citation:

Long, S., Moreno, C., Fan, S., & Nasr, A. S. (2026). **Implementing a Four-Step Evidence-Based Pushing Protocol for Labor and Birth.** *Nursing for Women's Health*.

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What was the clinical problem discussed in the Evidence Based Practice (EBP) article/study?

Over the years, nursing interventions during the second stage of labor have expanded and are focused on improving maternal and neonatal outcomes. Research is ongoing to identify best practices that promote improved outcomes as well as how to implement in real practice.

What was the purpose of this EBP article/study?

The objective of this study was first, to determine whether implementing an evidence-based practice pushing protocol for pregnant individuals in the second stage of labor with an epidural affects the observed duration of the second stage of labor, the degree of perineal laceration, and the use of operative vaginal birth compared with standard practice. Second, determine whether implementing an educational session on the protocol increases the frequency of nursing documentation of flexible sacrum positioning, investigation of fetal position, interventions to prevent lower-extremity nerve injury, and use of warm compresses.

What were the main findings?

In this EBP project, implementing nurse-driven evidence-based interventions for second-stage labor was associated with modest decreases in the number of perineal lacerations and operative vaginal births. Flexible sacrum positions and changing positions frequently, investigating fetal position, taking steps to prevent lower-extremity nerve injury, and using a warm compress during pushing were all incorporated into a consistent protocol during the second stage of labor. Further research is needed to demonstrate whether these changes can be replicated in a larger population.

What interventions were implemented or examined in this EBP article/study?

A Four-Step Evidence-Based Pushing Protocol for Labor and Birth was developed that focused on evidence-based nursing interventions. From November 15, 2022, through February 15, 2023, the medical records of 185 patients were reviewed pre-protocol; 184 were reviewed from March 20, 2023, through June 20, 2023, post-protocol. Protocol and documentation guidelines were implemented through unit-based, in-service educational programs and individual teaching sessions with superusers.