

Risks of Induced Labor

Pregnancy – Marcy Axness, Ph.D.

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Talking Points

- ❖ Are you aware of the risks of induced labor?
- ❖ Last year, a new study linking labor induction to increased autism risk made the news. “They found that children born to mothers whose labor was induced, augmented or both had a 27% increased risk of autism, compared with children born to mothers whose labors were not induced or augmented.” (18) (Study by Duke University and reported in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*)
- ❖ Marcy Axness reminds us that “With new awareness comes an understandable tendency to veer in the direction of feeling angry, ashamed, and similar negatives that keep us stuck. With new awareness also comes power, which is worth us taking a deep breath, steadying ourselves, and taking our heads out of the sand about autism risk and how we do birth in America.” (18)
- ❖ How does bombarding an infant’s oxytocin receptors with larger than normal amounts of Pitocin (synthetic oxytocin) affect their oxytocin receptors? How do you think this plays out in the long run?
- ❖ Drugs injected into the spine do cross the placenta. Epidurals do have an effect on the baby.
- ❖ Axness says, “Birth is the ultimate first impression, and it includes the wiring of brain circuitry that persists throughout our lives. It is part of the fundamental basis of an individual’s social-emotional functioning.” (18) How do you think a child’s birth plays out later in life?
 - A new study has identified Pitocin as a “significant risk factor” for later developing ADHD and researchers are currently exploring Pitocin induction and epidural as possible factors in the “complex causal tapestry involved in autism.” (18)
 - Physician and primal health researcher Michel Odent suggests “that up until now in our human history, it has been evolutionarily advantageous to develop the capacity for aggression. How best to do that? Make birth more difficult! He points out that this was well known in such warrior cultures as Sparta, where they made it a point to disturb the natural birth and postpartum process, knowing it would result in more aggression later

in life. Given the violent demands of their world, they deliberately cultivated in their new citizens an ‘impaired capacity to love.’” (18)

- Doesn’t today’s world call for a capacity to love? How does our modern birth culture play into this?

Resources

Full references for each article are available at <http://pathwaystofamilywellness.org/references.html>

Learn about the risks and alternatives “Induction of Labour: balancing risks”

<http://midwifethinking.com/2010/09/16/induction-of-labour-balancing-risks/>

Sara Wickman’s website and resources on induction: <http://www.sarawickham.com/tag/induction/>

“Epidural Anesthesia: Important Facts that will Help You Take Charge of Your Birth” by Alyssa Benedict, MPH <http://pathwaystofamilywellness.org/Pregnancy-Birth/epidural-anesthesia-important-facts-that-will-help-you-take-charge-of-your-birth.html>