

**Title** Promising measures to reduce the use of preventable obstetrical interventions in low-risk pregnant women

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### Aim

The use of obstetrical interventions is widespread in Québec. Considering this issue, the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MSSS), asked INESSS to identify measures for which there is scientific evidence for the reduction of the use of obstetrical interventions.

### Conclusions and results

In light of this assessment, INESSS submits results on the following obstetrical interventions:

- Epidural analgesia and non-pharmacological labour pain-management methods
- Electronic fetal monitoring
- Labour induction and labour augmentation
- Caesarean section

The sum of scientific evidence, opinions of experts and of stakeholders in obstetric care, indicates that physiological or vaginal birth for women with low-risk pregnancies is a desirable and attainable goal. The report proposes 10 general measures, 19 measures related to the five obstetrical interventions covered in this report, and 37 possible courses of action to reduce preventable procedures in women with low-risk pregnancies.

### Methods

The literature search focused on systematic reviews and meta-analyses of the five relevant interventions, and only data on full-term pregnancies (> 37 weeks) and low-risk pregnancies were selected. Meta-analyses of the randomized controlled trials on epidural analgesia were performed because no meta-analysis comparing pharmacological and non-pharmacological approaches had been found. The task of interpreting the data and formulating measures was supported by a scientific committee composed of members experienced in obstetrics, two obstetrician-gynecologists, two general practitioners, two nurses, a midwife, a researcher and a representative from the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC). The measures were then presented in a workshop attended by representatives from 26 organizations involved in obstetrics.

### Recommendation

INESSS recommends that the MSSS should invite organizations representing women, obstetric care providers, concerned professional organizations and obstetric teaching institutions to jointly develop, on the basis of the proposed measures, an action plan for reducing preventable obstetrical procedures in Québec with the perspective of improving informed and shared decisions with women.

### Written by

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