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Daily

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ObGynWorld
en Español

Early delivery not always needed with oligohydramnios

Source: Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine Annual Meeting, San Francisco, California, USA

Low amniotic fluid levels in late pregnancy may not always necessitate immediate delivery.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, immediate delivery is not always necessary in pregnant women who have low levels of amniotic fluid in the third trimester, say researchers.

"Amniotic fluid stems from the baby's urine, and the urine results from good blood flow, so if we see low fluid we assume there probably is not good blood flow and the fetus is compromised," explained lead researcher Dr. Ernest Graham (John's Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland, USA) at this month's annual meeting of the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine in San Francisco, California, USA.

The researchers studied pregnancy outcomes in 262 women in late gestation, among whom 131 had oligohydramnios (amniotic fluid depth of less than 5 cm), and 131 had normal amniotic fluid levels.

They found that patients with oligohydramnios were delivered earlier than the controls, but were less likely to undergo cesarean section. There was no increased risk of neonatal respiratory problems, immature intestines, or brain disorders associated with oligohydramnios. Furthermore, no significant differences in birth weight, level of acid in the umbilical cord, or length of hospital stay were found between the two groups.

"This study shows the fluid test is not as good as we thought, and there is most likely no reason to deliver the baby early if other tests are normal," comments Graham.

Posted: 11 February 2003

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