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### How Safe Is Hydrotherapy During Labor?

Clinicians have used hydrotherapy since the ancient days to aid childbirth; however, there is doubt over its safety for the mother and the baby. Hydrotherapy refers to the external or internal use of water in the forms of steam, ice, or liquid for health promotion or medication of various illnesses with various pressures, temperatures, sites, and periods (Mellado-García et al. 5617). Also called water therapy or aquatic therapy, different sites range from pools and baths to saunas to hot tubs. It is usually helpful in alleviating pain, promoting relaxation, reducing the duration of labor, lessening medical intervention, and improving the patient's overall well-being. It is commonly used in pregnant mothers during labor to relieve them from devastating pain (Schitter et al. 23). While some studies have pointed out some health complications associated with it, the detriments are only specific to mothers with underlying medical conditions. Therefore, hydrotherapy is a safe and beneficial intervention during birth for mothers with no underlying medical conditions.

Traditional societies have used water from time immemorial to ensure mothers have smooth childbirths. In the olden days, hydrotherapy was one of the naturopathic medication modalities applied broadly by ancient communities, including Romans, Chinese, Greeks, and Egyptians. Findings on historical hydrotherapy reveal water immersion during labor for the goal of ensuring pain relief. During childbirth, the technique focuses on support and comfort for the mother, commonly used in the initial stage of birth, which is the active primary stage, and in the

second one, referred to as dilation and expulsion, accordingly (Mellado-García et al. 5619). Several other clinical literature reviews on the intervention have confirmed that hydrotherapy has emotional and physical gains, resulting in a higher pain threshold. By considering the historical records on the use of hydrotherapy, together with many recent scholars asserting equal benefits for mothers undergoing labor without suggesting any associated health complications, hydrotherapy is a safe medical intervention during childbirth.

Hydrotherapy enhances relaxation and is very helpful in managing stress levels in pregnant mothers during childbirth. Giving birth is sometimes accompanied by high emotions full of stress and anxiety. Mothers worry about the unexpected outcome and the journey of parenthood, including coping with day-to-day life and tackling hormonal changes (Mallen-Perez et al. 312). Therefore, a soothing, quiet time in a hot tub can increase a feeling of completeness by reducing emotional torture for the pregnant woman. This finding refutes claims that hydrotherapy is unsafe for the mother or the baby; instead, it is a huge benefit that can improve the healthy outcome of the birth process. Mellado-García et al. (5623) portrayed that hydrotherapy has wide impacts on different body systems, depending on the temperature of the water, that ranges from emotional, physical, and cognitive well-being of the mother in all stages of pregnancy.

Even with the findings supporting the extended use and safety of hydrotherapy during labor, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) stress the need for high-quality investigations on the topic of neonatal and safety reasons (Mellado-García et al. 5619). The American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) also advises giving evidence-based data on hydrotherapy for uncomplicated pregnancies (Mellado-García et al. 5619). The recommendations mean that a mother's condition

during pregnancy or birth is crucial when thinking of hydrotherapy intervention. However, contrary to these concerns, researchers have indicated many benefits for pregnant women and their babies, with no associated risks reported. Hydrotherapy is generally safe; it is only likely to raise safety concerns for the mother or baby when certain health conditions or complicated pregnancies occur.

In conclusion, hydrotherapy is a safe and beneficial intervention during birth for mothers with no underlying medical conditions. It has many benefits, including alleviating pain, promoting relaxation, reducing labor length, lessening medical intervention, and improving the patient's overall well-being. The health complications and risks associated with hydrotherapy outweigh its benefits. Hydrotherapy has been used since immemorial to help mothers have smooth births. Many recent studies and healthcare agencies like AAP, ACOG, and ACNM also reveal its safety, with fear of unsafe outcomes depending on patient conditions. Notably, researchers have confirmed enormous benefits and lack of health complications in hydrotherapy for pregnant mothers. Arguably, hydrotherapy is a great intervention against various negative labor experiences for pregnant mothers.

## Works Cited

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