



# Midwifery bulletin

December 2024

**The aim of this current awareness bulletin is to provide a digest of recent guidelines, reports, research and best practice.**

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## News, Guidelines and Reports

**BBC News:** [Lighting panels lift mood on maternity wards](#)

**Care Quality Commission:** [Maternity survey results 2024](#)

**Department of Health and Social Care:** [Folic acid supplementation: advice to health professionals](#)

**Florence Nightingale Foundation:** [The potential impacts of additional advanced practice regulation on internationally educated nurses and midwives in the UK: final report.](#)

**Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership (HQIP):** [MBRRACE-UK – Perinatal care of recent migrant women with language barriers](#)

**House of Lords Preterm Births Committee:** [Preterm birth: reducing risks and improving lives](#)

**NHS Digital:** [NHS Maternity Statistics, England, 2023-24](#)

### NIHR

- [Challenge Maternity Disparities Consortium members announced](#)
- [Community perinatal mental health teams reduced women's risk of mental illness relapse](#)

**Nursing & Midwifery Council:** [Practice learning in nursing and midwifery education - an independent rapid review](#)

**Royal College of Nursing:** [Managing the Disposal of Pregnancy Remains](#)



**UK Health Security Agency: [RSV immunisation for older adults and pregnant women: vaccine coverage in England](#)**

### Commentary and Editorials

**Artificial placentas and wombs | British Journal of Midwifery 2024; 32(10):692-693**

George F Winter explores the benefits and ethical challenges associated with advancing technology in relation to artificial placentas and wombs

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**Is pregnancy a disease? | British Journal of Midwifery 2024; 32(10):574**

The rationale behind treating pregnancy as a disease, and whether it is useful to do so is discussed.

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### Cochrane Database of Systematic Review updates

- [Calcium supplementation \(other than for preventing or treating hypertension\) for improving pregnancy and infant outcomes](#)
- [Cell salvage for the management of postpartum haemorrhage](#)
- [Cycled light in the intensive care unit for preterm and low birth weight infants](#)
- [Effect and safety of intravenous iron compared to oral iron for treatment of iron deficiency anaemia in pregnancy](#)
- [Fluid restriction for treatment of symptomatic patent ductus arteriosus in preterm infants](#)
- [Hyaluronidase for reducing perineal trauma](#)
- [Tranexamic acid for preventing postpartum haemorrhage after caesarean section.](#)
- [Treatment for women with postpartum iron deficiency anaemia](#)

### Maternity services and workforce

**Development and validation of the climate change-related reproductive concerns scale (CCRCS) | Journal of Climate Change and Health 2024;20:100351.**

As global concerns about climate change intensify, emerging research reveals a link between climate change anxiety and individuals' decisions regarding parenthood. More people are choosing not to have children due to worries about their carbon footprint or the future implications of climate change on their offspring. To address this imperative, this study develops the Climate Change-related Reproductive Concerns Scale (CCRCS) and evaluates its psychometric properties.

Available in full here: [Journal of Climate Change and Health](#)

### Maternal mental health

**A population pharmacokinetic model for sertraline in women during the**



**perinatal period-A contribution from the ConcePTION project | British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology 2024; 90(11):2849-2860**

Sertraline is frequently prescribed for mental health conditions in both pregnant and breastfeeding women. Infant exposure to sertraline, influenced by CYP2C19 phenotype and breast milk fat content, remains low, providing reassurance regarding the use of sertraline during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Available in full here: [British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology](#)

**Exploration of fathers' mental health and well-being concerns during the transition to fatherhood, and paternal perinatal support: scoping review | BMJ Open 2024; 14(11):e078386**

The many concerns and challenges highlighted in the review demonstrate the importance of understanding the negative impact of the transition on fathers' mental health and well-being. There is a need for greater attention to fathers' experiences of paternal perinatal support and programmes through research and practise to inform future interventional development.

Available in full here: [BMJ Open](#)

**Antenatal care**

**Vitamin B12 deficiency: treatment during pregnancy**

Intramuscular hydroxocobalamin and oral cyanocobalamin are [treatment options](#) for the management of clinically relevant vitamin B12 deficiency during pregnancy.

**Fundamentals**

**The endocrine system and associated disorders | British Journal of Midwifery 2024; 32(11):624-633.**

Third of three articles exploring the fundamentals related to anatomy, physiology and pathophysiology in relation to three important topics: the cardiac system, the respiratory system and the endocrine system. The maternal endocrine system and the key physiological adaptations in pregnancy are described with a summary of the key pathophysiological conditions that may occur.

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**Pregnancy complications**

**Aspirin 162 mg vs 81 mg for preeclampsia prophylaxis in high-risk obese individuals: a comparative effectiveness open-label randomized trial (ASPREGO) | American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology 2024**

Among high-risk obese individuals, there was a 78% probability of benefit that 162 mg aspirin compared with 81 mg will decrease the rate of preeclampsia with severe features. With the best estimate of a 12% reduction when using 162 mg of aspirin compared with 81 mg of aspirin in this population. This trial supports doing a larger multicenter trial.

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**Medical Diseases in Pregnancy: An Acute on Chronic Focus | British Journal**



### **of Hospital Medicine 2024; 85(11):1-13**

This article discusses some of these themes and the management of common medical problems in pregnancy.

Available in full here: [British Journal of Hospital Medicine](#)

### **Association between gestational diabetes mellitus diagnostic criteria and adverse pregnancy outcomes: a systematic review and meta-analysis of adjusted effect sizes from studies using current diagnostic criteria | BMJ Open 2024; 14(11)**

GDM is consistently associated with adverse pregnancy, maternal and foetal outcomes, regardless of the diagnostic criteria used. These findings suggest no significant difference in risk between lower and higher blood glucose cut-offs used in GDM diagnosis.

Available in full here: [BMJ Open](#)

### **Gestational diabetes mellitus: ensuring healthy futures | British Journal of Midwifery 2024; 32(10):552-560.**

Overview of gestational diabetes, the leading medical disorder complicating pregnancy, which is managed through diet, exercise and pharmacotherapy. The long-term cardiometabolic consequences on the health of future generations is highlighted.

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## **Labour and birth**

### **Caesarean section vs vaginal birth: a narrative review of decision making and postnatal outcomes | British Journal of Midwifery 2024; 32(10):544-550.**

Literature review comparing the factors that drive women's decision making on mode of birth and postnatal outcomes. To adjust to changing trends in childbirth, obstetric support should target unhealthy cultural norms, aiming to end unhealthy practices by providing evidence-based education on modes of birth and their outcomes from early in pregnancy.

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### **Cervical ripening at home or in hospital during induction of labour: the CHOICE prospective cohort study, process evaluation and economic analysis | Health Technology Assessment 2024; 28(81):1-142.**

Home cervical ripening using balloon catheter may be as safe for babies as using prostaglandins in hospital in low and moderate-risk groups, but there is substantial uncertainty. Home cervical ripening with balloon is likely to be cost saving. Impacts on workload, service user and staff experiences were complex.

Available in full here: [Health Technology Assessment](#)

### **Misoprostol as Oral Solution or Oral Tablet for Induction of Labour (MISOBEST): A Randomised Controlled Non-Inferiority Trial | BJOG: An International Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology 2024**



Prospective, randomised, non-inferiority, open-label, blinded endpoint trial. Off-label oral solution of misoprostol was non-inferior to the licensed oral tablet regarding efficacy of IOL defined as vaginal delivery within 24 h.

Available in full here: [BJOG](#)

### Infant feeding

**Sources of breastfeeding knowledge and support skills among midwives and students: a scoping review | British Journal of Midwifery 2024; 32(12):662-671**

The aim of this study was to explore sources of breastfeeding knowledge and acquisition of support skills among midwives and midwifery students.

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### Postnatal care

**Men's experiences of the transition to fatherhood during the first postnatal year: A qualitative systematic review | British Journal of Occupational Therapy 2024; 87(11):661-672**

Fatherhood is a significant transition in a man's life, introducing new challenges. Yet men's experiences of this period remain poorly understood. This study explored the experiences of men during the transition to fatherhood over the first postnatal year.

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**Surgical site infections in caesarean wounds | British Journal of Nursing 2024; 33(20):S32-S40.**

The increasing incidence of surgical site infections (SSIs) following caesarean sections highlights the necessity for updated protocols that address risk factors throughout the preoperative, intraoperative, and postoperative stages. Negative Pressure Wound Therapy (NPWT) and hydrocolloid dressings have demonstrated potential for improving wound management and reducing complications, particularly by enhancing dressing integrity.

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### Neonatal care

**Intratracheal Budesonide Mixed With Surfactant for Extremely Preterm Infants The PLUSS Randomized Clinical Trial | JAMA 2024; 332(22):1889-1899**

In this international randomized clinical trial of 1059 extremely preterm infants, there was no clear difference in survival free of bronchopulmonary dysplasia between infants who received intratracheal budesonide mixed with surfactant and those who received surfactant only (25.6% vs 22.6%; adjusted risk difference, 2.7% [95% CI, -2.1% to 7.4%]). In extremely preterm infants receiving surfactant, early intratracheal budesonide may have little to no effect on survival free of bronchopulmonary dysplasia.

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**Resuscitation of the newborn | Obstetrics, Gynaecology and Reproductive Medicine 2024; 34(7):181-188**

Most newborns are born vigorous and do not require resuscitation. However, the World Health Organization has estimated that 10% of all newborn infants need some intervention at birth and approximately 0.5% will require cardiopulmonary resuscitation

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