Controversies in Periviable Birth Management

Rachel Sinkey, MD
Assistant Professor, Division of Maternal-Fetal Medicine
Department of OB/GYN
University of Alabama at Birmingham

Educational Objectives

- Participant will be able to describe historical perspectives of viability.
- Participant will be familiarized with the ACOG / SMFM Obstetric Care Consensus.
- Participant will be able to use the NICHD Periviable calculator.
- Participant will be able to describe ethical considerations of periviable care.

Outline

1. Historical perspectives of periviable care
   a. Randomized controlled trials demonstrate improved neonatal survival among preterm infants of mothers who received antenatal corticosteroids (BTMS).
   b. Trends toward increased interventions over time.

2. ACOG / SMFM Obstetric Care Consensus
   a. Spectrum of outcomes for infants born in the periviable period
   b. Impact on maternal health.
   c. Potential interventions: BTMS, Magnesium sulfate, antibiotics, tocolytics, cerclage, and cesarean delivery.
3. NICHD Periviable Calculator
   a. Where are the data from?
   b. What is the utility in clinical practice?

4. Ethical considerations of periviable care
   a. Withholding of care versus withdrawal of care
   b. Be aware of the self-fulfilling prophecy
   c. Time lag likely skews outcome data
   d. Never abandon the parents

5. What interventions for periviable birth management are on the horizon?
   a. Alternative modes of surfactant delivery
   b. Artificial womb

Select References

