

Introduction

Most babies are delivered by a lithotomy birthing position.

- In the lithotomy position, the patient is lying on their back with their knees and hips flexed at 90 degrees and hips abducted to about 30 degrees (Thomas, 2019).
- The World Health organization suggests alternative birth positions that benefit the birth and mother's comfort, yet the lithotomy position is more prevalent (Hemmerich et al., 2018).
- A normal birth is defined as "an unassisted vaginal birth without induction of labor; epidural, spinal or general anesthesia; or episiotomy" (Prosser et al., 2018, p.1).
- Upright birthing positions provide a more optimal position for birth due to the force of natural pelvic expansion and gravity (Hemmerich et al., 2018)
- Mothers are uninformed regarding birth positions (Zileni et al., 2017).
- An upright birth is defined as sitting, squatting, kneeling, standing , and hands on knees (Zileni et al., 2017).
- From conception through age 5, the projected maternal morbidity cost for all births in 2019 is \$32.3 billion (Commonwealth Fund Eds., 2021).
- 861 women were identified as dying from maternal causes in the United States in 2020 (Hoyert, 2022).
- A positive child birth experience is defined as one that fulfills a woman's personal and sociocultural beliefs and expectations (World Health Organization Eds., 2019).

Background

Implementing an upright birth can lead to less assisted births and episiotomies resulting in a quicker recover (Doyle et al., 2019).

- An episiotomy is an incision made in the perineum during child birth between the vaginal opening and the anus that often causes a more painful and hard recovery (Mayo Clinic Eds., 2020).
- 91.4% gave birth while in a supine position (Zileni et al., 2017).
- It is the nurse's job to educate their patient on birthing positions that will provide the best outcomes (Zileni et al., 2017).



Morrow, M. (2020). MotherLift. photograph. Retrieved March 24, 2022, from <https://motherlift.com/birth-positions/>.

Nursing Implications

- Overall, research and data provide pertinent information that supports the intervention of nurses and midwives providing patient education to explore birthing options outside of standard practice that could lead to more positive outcomes.



Kim, Y. (2021). 9 Labor Positions to Ease Pain While Giving Birth. photograph, Parents.com. Retrieved March 27, 2022, from https://www.parents.com/pregnancy/giving-birth/labor-and-delivery/check-out-these-labor-positions-thatll-ease-pain/?slide=slide_f1642c6c-6d7b-4762-a000-839f5f4c4bb2#slide_f1642c6c-6d7b-4762-a000-839f5f4c4bb2.

Purpose Statement & Research Question

- The purpose of this literature review is to explore birth outcomes/positive birth experiences related to birth position.
- What are the positive birth experiences of laboring mothers related to upright birth positions versus supine?

Literature Review Methods

- Data Bases Used: CINAHL, EBSCO, Cochrane Library, and Google Scholar Search Engine
- Key Words: "benefits of an upright birth," "birthing positions," and "lithotomy"
- A total of ten articles were used to conduct this literature review.
- The articles examined were no older than five years and were all peer-reviewed studies.

Conclusion

- An upright birthing position is recommended for women with or without epidural analgesia (World Health Organization Eds., 2019).
- There is a need for education for health care providers and mothers to facilitate normal birth (Prosser et al., 2018).
- Normal birth rates are low, as further research is needed (Prosser et al., 2018).
- Research supports a change in the lithotomy birthing position for laboring mothers (Zileni et al., 2017).



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Findings

According to Prosser et al., (2018):

- The overall rate of normal birth was 28.7%
- The probability of having a normal birth was higher for women: living in inner and outer regional areas; receiving GP shared care, standard public care, public midwifery continuity care, or private midwifery care; who **had the freedom of movement throughout labor**; received continuity of care in labor and birth; who had no augmentation of labor; and **gave birth in a non-supine position**

According to Zileni et al., (2017):

- 66.4% of women knew about the benefits of walking; 60.6% of women knew about the lateral labor position; 99.2% of women knew about the supine birthing position; 50% walked during labor; **91.4% gave birth in a supine position.**

According to Doyle et al., (2019):

- Women using a device aiding them to achieve an upright position **spent half the time actively pushing in the second stage of labor.**
- They also had **less adverse effects delivering** in an upright position.

References

