

Original articles

J. Perinat. Med.
21 (1993) 107–116

Clinical significance of fetal heart rate patterns during labor IX: prolonged pregnancy

Luis A. Cibils and Roberto Votta

The Chicago Lying-In Hospital, University of Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A.

1 Introduction

Prolonged pregnancy (≥ 294 days of amenorrhea from last menstrual period) is considered with good reason to represent an abnormality in human gestation. Whether it should be considered "high-risk" or not is a matter of controversy. Some flatly state that there is no reason to consider them differently "from any other laboring patients" [12] or that standard management suffices to obtain good outcomes [7, 9, 13, 19] while others recommend a closer observation [5, 10, 11, 14, 18]. It is undeniable that in large populations the perinatal morbidity and mortality are slightly but significantly increased in this subgroup [6, 16, 20, 21]. However, by the same token, the great majority of fetuses are born without perinatal problems. Nevertheless, it would seem hard to accept perinatal deaths or neonatal impairment of fetuses born without anomalies and who are fully grown *in utero*.

The antenatal testing of pregnancies passing the 280th or 287th day is becoming an accepted practice even though no test has been found to be a precise predictor of complications. It would, therefore, seem reasonable to concentrate on intrapartum continuous monitoring as a means to find developing problems and to prevent or solve them. In spite of the universal application of electronic intrapartum monitoring of fetal heart rate (FHR) and uterine contractions (UC), very few publications discuss specific interpretation of prolonged gestation

Curriculum vitae

LUIS A. CIBILS, M. D., graduated from the National University of Paraguay. After training he did postgraduate work, under various fellowships, in Spain, France, and Uruguay where he concentrated on Perinatal Medicine (1957–1960). In the U. S. A. since 1960, and a Professor at The University of Chicago since 1966, he has continued to work in that area publishing his experience in the book "Electronic Fetal-Maternal Monitoring" published in 1981. He edited the volume "Surgical Diseases in Pregnancy" in 1990. His bibliography numbers over 95 titles between articles and book chapters.



recordings [4, 12, 15]. Previous publications from this institution [4, 20] have touched on that subject but the present series reviews exclusively the experience accumulated prospectively pointing out the merits and shortcomings of current interpretations.

2 Materials and methods

From July 1, 1980 until December 31, 1984, there were 12,930 deliveries of more than 20 weeks gestation at the Chicago Lying-In Hos-