

feature articles

7 Peanut Balls for Women during Labor: An Approach to Promote Vaginal Birth



Peanut balls as a labor support technique may be an effective method of promoting vaginal birth. In this study of 4,005 patients from 2018 to 2023, 1,680 of whom used a peanut ball, peanut balls were associated with increased odds of a vaginal birth. Offering hands-on education about peanut balls for all members of the maternity care team is recommended for optimal implementation of this practice.

Ashley Preksta, MSN, RN, RNC-OB, Sheri Walker, MSN, RN, RNC-OB, NPD-BC, Abigail Hebb, DNP, RN, NE-BC, CMSRN, and Yue Yin, PhD

13 A Three-Intervention Evidence-Based Bundle to Reduce Chorioamnionitis Among Patients with Prelabor Rupture of Membranes

In this quality improvement project, a three-intervention evidence-based bundle was introduced to reduce chorioamnionitis for women with prelabor rupture of membranes in a large urban academic medical center in New York City. The bundle included avoiding unnecessary vaginal exams, hourly pericare with peripad changes as needed, and appropriate hand hygiene. Results suggest the bundle may be effective in reducing risk of chorioamnionitis among patients with prelabor rupture of membranes.

Sonia Lander, DNP, CNM, Regina Cardaci, CNM, PhD, Sepideh Mehri, MD, MAS-PSHQ, and Jessica Deeb, MS, RN, WHNP-BC, IBCLC, LCCE

20 Engagement with a Text-based, Bilingual Blood Pressure Monitoring Program during Postpartum among a Multiethnic Population



Research on remote monitoring for postpartum patients is lacking, particularly in a Spanish speaking population. Satisfaction and engagement with remote blood pressure monitoring was evaluated in this study of 388 Asian, Black, and Hispanic postpartum patients from four hospitals from Philadelphia and New York City. Spanish speakers were just as, if not more, likely than English speakers to engage in the remote monitoring program, suggesting the potential utility

of remote monitoring for postpartum follow-up among this population.

Sarah Y. Nowlin, PhD, MSN, RN, Natalie Boychuk, MPH, Nicole Essein, MSN, RN-BC, Kimberly Glazer, PhD, MPH, Frances M. Howell, PhD, MA, Micki Burdick, PhD, MA, Oluwadamilola Oshewa, BS, Maria Monterroso, Alva Rodriguez, MPH, Camila Cabrera, MD, Sheela Maru, MD, MPH, Jennifer Lewey, MD, MPH, Elizabeth A. Howell, MD, MPP, Lisa Levine, MD, MSCE, and Teresa Janevic, PhD, MPH

29 Women's Experiences with a Perinatal Peer Support Specialist Program



In this study, the experiences of women with symptoms of depression and anxiety in the perinatal period who participated in a virtual peer support specialist program were evaluated. Analysis of interviews with program participants allowed identification of three themes: seeking help for mental health symptoms, receiving unbiased peer support, and improving mental health symptoms. Virtual peer support programs may be helpful for women with perinatal anxiety and depression.

Kalyn M. Renbarger, PhD, RN, Jean Marie Place, PhD, Corie Hess, PhD, and Lina Burkhart, PhD, HSPP

36 Online Social Support for Medicaid-Eligible Pregnant Women



Medicaid eligible pregnant women are a chronically stressed population with various negative perinatal effects due in part to their challenging financial status. This study explored experiences of Medicaid-eligible pregnant women using Facebook groups. Most participants found their experiences via Facebook overwhelmingly positive and supportive, even if they had some negative encounters. Nurses can recognize social media as a venue to access social support, start peer-led communities using social media, and engage in policy work on social media recommendations for pregnant women.

Kathryn M. L. Konrad, PhD, RNC-OB, LCCE, FACCE

43 Immersion Swaddle Bathing Compared to Traditional Sponge Baths for the First Newborn Bath in the Hospital and Thermoregulation

In this study, two types of bathing methods for the first newborn bath in the hospital were evaluated for their effect on newborn thermoregulation (traditional sponge bath and immersion swaddle bath). Data from 90 newborns were included: 30 preintervention and 60 newborns in two post intervention cycles (30 per cycle). Post-intervention, significant improvements in thermoregulation were found among immersion swaddle bath infants in shorter return times to baseline pre-bath temperatures. Immersion swaddle bathing shows promise as a technique to promote newborn thermoregulation.

Katherine Dalton, DNP, MSN, RN

MCN

The American Journal of Maternal/Child Nursing®

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2026 VOL. 51 NO. 1

ongoing columns

6 EDITORIAL

Introducing MCN's New Column: Writing and Research Tips from Experts

Participants in our MCN Editorial Fellowship have shared a variety of gaps in knowledge and skill in preparing a manuscript for journal publication. We decided to resurrect a type of column that was featured in MCN from 1981 to 1997, Keys to Research. Although the name implies a sole focus on research, much of the content included advice on scholarly writing. We are pleased to introduce our new column, Writing and Research Tips from Experts in this issue. It is fitting that our inaugural column is authored by one of our 2025 MCN Editorial Fellows, Kelsie Barta PhD, APRN, FNP-C, IBCLC. We hope you enjoy the column, and we welcome suggestions for topics and authors.

Kathleen Rice Simpson, PhD, RNC-OB, CNS-BC, FAAN, and Annie J. Rohan, PhD, RN, FAANP, FAAN

47 HOT TOPICS IN MATERNITY NURSING

New Clinical Practice Guideline from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists: Cervical Ripening in Pregnancy

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists published a new clinical practice guideline on cervical ripening methods for women with term, singleton, vertex pregnancies and intact membranes. Our maternity nursing expert, Dr. Wisner, presents a summary of the recommendations with implications for clinical practice.

Kirsten Wisner, PhD, RNC-OB, CNS, C-EFM, NE-BC

48 HOT TOPICS IN PEDIATRIC NURSING

Alarming Trends in the Health of America's Children

In a new study, researchers reported discouraging and alarming data showing significantly worsening trends in child mortality, chronic physical, developmental, and mental health; obesity; and functional conditions including sleep patterns, earlier onset of puberty, limitations in physical activity, fire-arm injuries and motor vehicle accidents, depression, and loneliness. Our pediatric nursing expert, Dr. Beal, reviews the research and makes recommendations for nurses who care for children and families.

Judy A. Beal, DNSc, RN, FNP, FAAN

49 BREASTFEEDING

Human Milk: Nature's Epigenetic Prescription

Human milk is a living, dynamic fluid with hundreds of unique bioactive factors, including hormones, cytokines, enzymes, stem cells, and non-coding RNAs that extend far beyond nutrition alone. Our guest columnist, Ms. Markonda, describes components and benefits of human

milk that all who care for breastfeeding women and their families should know and recommendations for promoting human milk for infants and toddlers.

Lakshmi Prasanna Markonda, MSN, RN

50 GLOBAL HEALTH AND NURSING

Disparities in Preterm Infant Outcomes

Preterm birth is a global public health concern and the largest contributor to neonatal deaths worldwide. Despite the lack of robust, long-term outcome data for preterm infants, especially for those born in developing countries, available data on rates of preterm birth and select short-term outcomes reveal staggering disparities. Our global health and nursing expert, Dr. Nist, explains the most recent evidence.

Marliese Dion Nist, PhD, RNC-NIC

51 WRITING AND RESEARCH TIPS FROM EXPERTS

Journal Article Writing: Preparation and Planning Can Enhance Success

Being effective in preparing a manuscript for journal publication takes advance planning and organization. In our inaugural new column, 2025 MCN Editorial Fellow Dr. Kelsie Barta shares her tips on scholarly writing and a step-by-step approach to manuscript preparation for journal submission and successful publication.

Kelsie Barta, PhD, APRN, FNP-C, IBCLC

52 TOWARD EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICE

Experts suggest how 6 research articles can be used in nursing practice.

Coordinated by Annie J. Rohan, PhD, RN, FAANP, FAAN
Comments by: Shandeigh N. Berry, PhD, RN, CNE, Akeeka S. Davis, MSN, MBA, BSHCS, RN, AMB-BC, and Holiday H. Solly, BSN, RN, IBCLC

55 PERINATAL PATIENT SAFETY

Apgar Scores less than 7 at 5 Minutes for Term Newborns by Maternal Characteristics: United States Births 2024

Apgar scores less than 7 at 5 minutes of life are unusual for term newborns, however knowledge and skill are required to be ready to use neonatal resuscitation processes as needed. Data on Apgar scores from 2024 United States certificates of live birth are presented.

Kathleen Rice Simpson, PhD, RNC-OB, CNS-BC, FAAN

MISSION STATEMENT

MCN: The American Journal of Maternal Child Nursing's mission is to promote safe, high-quality nursing care based on the most current evidence, standards, and guidelines for nurses practicing in maternity, neonatal, midwifery, and pediatric specialties through dissemination of evidence-based, clinically relevant articles including research, practice, policy, quality improvement, and scholarly reviews. This peer-reviewed journal covers aspects of maternal, neonatal, and pediatric nursing care in the inpatient, outpatient, and community health settings.

MCN information for authors is available at www.mcnjournal.com, click on Journal Info.

When citing an article from this Journal in your CV or in a reference list, please use the Journal's complete name every time:

"MCN, The American Journal of Maternal Child Nursing"