

## Routine episiotomy during vaginal birth

Numbers for pregnant women over 16 years of age who had an incision in the area between the vagina and anus (episiotomy) during childbirth either when it was considered necessary (e.g., danger of severe vaginal injuries of the mother or because of risks to the baby) or as a routine measure.

	<b>100 women with an episiotomy when necessary</b>	<b>100 women with a routine episiotomy</b>
<b>Benefits</b>		
How many women developed an infection of the region between the vagina and anus (perineum)?	2	2
How many women experienced pain during intercourse for more than six months?		about 15 in each group
How many women suffered from urinary incontinence for at least six months after giving birth?		about 31 in each group
<b>Harms</b>		
How many women suffered severe injuries of the vaginal area during childbirth?	3	4
How many women experienced moderate to severe pain three days after the episiotomy?		about 32 in each group

**Short summary:** Precautionary episiotomies as a routine procedure cannot prevent complications and pain. These resulted in one out of every 100 women unnecessarily suffering serious genital injuries.

Source: Jiang et al. Cochrane Database Syst Rev 2017(2):CD000081.

Last update: April 2018

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