

**PARTNERS IN PERINATAL HEALTH
CONFERENCE
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*“Eco-Friendly Birth: How to Reduce Troubling Downstream Effects of
Common OB Practices”*

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Eco-Friendly Birth:

Troubling Downstream Effects of Common Ob Practices & How to Reduce Them

Penny Simkin, PT

Objectives

At the end of the session, the learner will be able to:

1. Apply the terminology of ecology to childbirth practices.
2. Describe downstream effects on baby or family of routines in maternity care.
3. Explain ways to optimize downstream effects
4. Apply the doula's role in enhancing eco-friendly birth

Outline

- I. Introduction
 - A. Definition of ecology-related terms
 - B. Application of these terms to birth management and outcomes
- II. Habitats
 - A. For the fetus in pregnancy and in labor
 - B. For the mother in pregnancy and labor
 - C. For the mother/newborn dyad
- III. "Upstream Influences" on the birth process
 - A. Location – the physical environment
 - B. Laboring mothers' needs and behavior
 - C. Care practices: The "Perfect Storm"
- IV. Evidence-based discussion of downstream effects of common obstetric practices
- V. Modification of care practices to optimize downstream effects
- VI. The Doula's role in Eco-Friendly Birth
- VII. Conclusion: If giving birth and being born are removed from the life cycle, how will the human species be influenced?

Teaching Methods

Illustrated Lecture, Handouts

Audio/Visual Requirements

LCD Projector

Post-Test Questions and Answers:

1. Define "Meconium Footprint."

Answer:

- The "meconium footprint" is a measure of the negative impact of specific routine maternity care practices on the mother-baby habitat
- It is based on the concept of the "carbon footprint," which is a measure of the impact that one's actions will have on the environment.

2. True/False: The fetus's habitat (the uterus and its many fetal support functions) can be adversely influenced by such practices as induction of labor, cesarean section, and other common practices..

Answer: True

3. Which of the following maternity care practices does NOT contribute to eco-friendly birth?

- a) immediate skin-to-skin contact between mother and newborn after birth
- b) epidural analgesia
- c) a peaceful, warm, quiet, dimly-lighted room
- d) spontaneous bearing down during the second stage of labor

Answer: b

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