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**The Power of Paracetamol: Does it impact the duration of the latent phase of labour?**

Paracetamol is a widely recommended strategy to manage the discomfort experienced during the latent phase of labour. Paracetamol inhibits prostaglandin synthesis, thereby reducing the production of prostaglandins, resulting in reduced sensations of pain. It is well documented that prostaglandins play an integral role in labour by contributing to cervical dilation and uterine contractions and are commonly used in the process of induction of labour. A high level of evidence has been found by various researchers theorising that the prostaglandin inhibitory characteristics of paracetamol may be associated with the anecdotally observed increase in the duration of the latent phase of labour over recent decades. Qualitative evidence has found an association with prolonged latent phases of labour, and reduced satisfaction levels among birthing women.

This presentation will propose an observational cohort research project using a prospective, dual cohort strategy to identify if the use of paracetamol as a pain management strategy during early labour is associated with an increase in the duration of the latent phase of labour. Relevant operational definitions of the latent phase of labour will be determined in consultation with participating midwives and obstetricians. The sample population will be clearly identified as well, term, primiparous women, labouring spontaneously. Data will be collected through the inclusion of relevant mandatory fields in the ACT Health Digital Health Record.

The results of this research will provide an initial evidence base to inform future research and practice regarding recommendations and advice for pain management and coping strategies for the latent phase of labour.

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