

It is time to introduce ST analysis for fetal monitoring in the labour ward?

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ABSTRACT

Five randomized controlled trials have been published on intrapartum fetal heart rate monitoring with ST analysis of the fetal electrocardiogram, but the debate on its usefulness or otherwise has not yet been ended. We consider ST analysis a useful and cost-effective addition to conventional fetal heart rate monitoring. We will motivate this opinion by discussing the pathophysiology of ST changes in relation to fetal asphyxia, the results of the randomized controlled trials and numerous meta-analyses of these randomized controlled trials and trends in fetal outcome in hospitals in different countries following the introduction of the ST technology in the labor ward.