

Pitocin, Vaginal Delivery Post-Cesarean: Nurse Must Watch For Uterine Hyper-Stimulation.

The Court of Appeals of Texas saw the trial as a classic battle of the experts. One side claimed that Pitocin may only be used with extreme caution, if at all, to induce vaginal delivery after a prior cesarean. The other side claimed there was no scientific data linking Pitocin to increased risk of uterine rupture.

It was apparent that the hospital's labor and delivery nursing staff was largely unfamiliar with the concept that Pitocin can be associated with a risk of uterine hyper-stimulation, uterine rupture and placental abruption.

COURT OF APPEALS OF TEXAS
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The court upheld the jury's verdict for the mother and child.

Uterine Rupture

Based on the package-insert warnings the court said when Pitocin is used post-cesarean the labor and delivery nurses must watch the monitors carefully for signs of uterine hyper-stimulation.

Delay in Cesarean

When vaginal delivery has to be abandoned in favor of a cesarean the nurses have responsibilities in getting it done very quickly. A nursing supervisor must be notified if a physician is not immediately available to start the procedure. The nurses must move the patient to the operating room and prep her with the utmost speed. Christus Spohn v. De La Fuente, 2007 WL 2323989 (Tex. App., August 16, 2007).