Clinical Practice Guidelines:
Obstetrics/Umbilical cord rupture

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Date
May, 2018

Purpose
To ensure consistent management of Umbilical cord rupture.

Scope
Applies to all QAS clinical staff.

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Review date
May, 2021

Information security
This document has been security classified using the Queensland Government Information Security Classification Framework (QGISCF) as UNCLASSIFIED and will be managed according to the requirements of the QGISF.

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Umbilical cord rupture

The tensile strength of the umbilical cord is directly proportional to the weight of the baby by approximately 2.5 times. A pre-term lower weight baby’s umbilical cord will possess less tensile strength. Cord rupture can cause significant haemorrhage, hypovolemic shock and even exsanguination of the newly born.[1]

Risk factors include:

- short cord
- precipitous unassisted delivery of the baby dangling by cord
- premature delivery (friable cord)

Clinical features

- deteriorating condition of the newly born
- visible blood loss between cord and clamp
- visible tear in the umbilical cord

Risk assessment

- umbilical cord rupture represents a life-threatening emergency to the newly born
- a small amount of blood loss from the newly born represents a significant proportion of their total circulating volume

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