

Comparison: Laxatives compared with placebo

Source: Turawa EB, Musekiwa A, Rohwer AC. Interventions for preventing postpartum constipation. Cochrane Database Syst Rev.2015;(9):CD011625.

Certainty assessment							No of patients		Effect		Certainty (GRADE)	Importance
No of studies	Study design	Risk of bias	Inconsistency	Indirectness	Imprecision	Other considerations	Laxative	Placebo	Relative (95% CI)	Absolute (95% CI)		
Number of women with first bowel movement less than 24 hours after birth												
1	randomized trials	very serious ^a	not serious	not serious	not serious	none	142/224 (63.4%)	54/247 (21.9%)	RR 2.90 (2.24 to 3.75)	415 more per 1000 (from 271 more to 601 more)	⊕⊕○○ LOW	CRITICAL
Number of women with first bowel movement on day 1 after birth												
1 ^b	randomized trials	very serious ^a	not serious	not serious	serious ^c	none	69/224 (30.8%)	81/247 (32.8%)	RR 0.94 (0.72 to 1.22)	20 fewer per 1000 (from 92 fewer to 72 more)	⊕○○○ VERY LOW	CRITICAL
Number of women with first bowel movement on day 2 after birth												
1 ^b	randomized trials	very serious ^a	not serious	not serious	not serious	none	9/224 (4.0%)	44/247 (17.8%)	RR 0.23 (0.11 to 0.45)	137 fewer per 1000 (from 159 fewer to 98 fewer)	⊕⊕○○ LOW	CRITICAL
Number of women with first bowel movement on day 3 after birth												
1 ^d	randomized trials	very serious ^a	not serious	not serious	serious ^e	none	0/224 (0.0%)	10/247 (4.0%)	RR 0.05 (0.00 to 0.89)	38 fewer per 1000 (from 4 fewer to --)	⊕○○○ VERY LOW	CRITICAL
Number of women with first bowel movement on day 4 after birth												
1 ^d	randomized trials	very serious ^a	not serious	not serious	very serious ^{c,e}	none	1/224 (0.4%)	5/247 (2.0%)	RR 0.22 (0.23 to 1.87)	16 fewer per 1000 (from 16 fewer to 18 more)	⊕○○○ VERY LOW	CRITICAL
Number of postpartum enemas given												
1	randomized trials	very serious ^a	not serious	not serious	very serious ^{c,f}	none	20/123 (16.3%)	31/121 (25.6%)	RR 0.63 (0.38 to 1.05)	95 fewer per 1000 (from 159 fewer to 13 more)	⊕○○○ VERY LOW	CRITICAL
Side-effects – women with abdominal cramps												
1 ^d	randomized trials	very serious ^a	not serious	not serious	very serious ^{c,e}	none	23/224 (10.3%)	6/247 (2.4%)	RR 4.23 (1.75 to 10.19)	78 more per 1000 (from 18 more to 223 more)	⊕○○○ VERY LOW	CRITICAL

Certainty assessment							No of patients		Effect		Certainty (GRADE)	Importance
No of studies	Study design	Risk of bias	Inconsistency	Indirectness	Imprecision	Other considerations	Laxative	Placebo	Relative (95% CI)	Absolute (95% CI)		

Side-effects on the baby – loose stools

1	randomized trials	very serious ^a	not serious	not serious	very serious ^{c,e,f}	none	3/126 (2.4%)	6/155 (3.9%)	RR 0.62 (0.16 to 2.41)	15 fewer per 1000 (from 33 fewer to 55 more)	⊕○○○ VERY LOW	CRITICAL
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Side-effects on the baby – diarrhoea

1	randomized trials	very serious ^a	not serious	not serious	very serious ^{c,e,f}	none	2/126 (1.6%)	1/155 (0.6%)	RR 2.46 (0.23 to 26.82)	9 more per 1000 (from 5 fewer to 167 more)	⊕○○○ VERY LOW	CRITICAL
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CI: confidence interval; RR: risk ratio.

a. The effect provided by study "C".

b. Excluded from the analysis were trials using drugs no longer indicated in the postpartum women (Diamond 1968 and Mundow 1975).

c. Wide confidence interval crossing the line of no effect.

d. Excluded from the analysis were trials using drugs no longer indicated in the postpartum women (Diamond 1968).

e. Less than 30 events.

f. Less than 300 participants.