

# **VARIATION OF NORMAL: GBS OR GROUP-B STREP**

## What is it?

- Group-B Beta-Hemolytic Streptococci Infection
- 10 - 30% of all women have GBS present in the intestine, rectum, vagina or urinary tract.
- Bacteria can be present, undetected, and cause no problems or symptoms for mom. It is only if baby contracts the infection that problems can occur.
- A woman who has GBS is said to be colonized. Colonization will wax and wane, light to heavy, but once a woman is found to be positive for colonization she is almost always considered to be positive.

## What's the risk?

- In the U.S.: For every 1,000 women who are GBS positive and do not receive antibiotics:
  - 500 babies will be colonized
  - 10 – 20 will have early GBS infections
  - .5 – 1 will die
- It is not possible to eradicate GBS from a woman's system, although certain herbal remedies seem to help control colonization.

## How is it treated/handled?

- Intrapartum chemoprophylaxis, i.e., the administration of preventative IV antibiotics (usually penicillin) to the laboring woman. Antibiotics go into the mother and, through her bloodstream, to the baby.
- There is now one standard approach to treatment per new CDC guidelines established in 2002:
  - A late prenatal (35 - 37 weeks) culture is taken. If the woman is found to be GBS positive, antibiotics will be administered to her when she presents herself in labor.

SEE CDC GUIDELINES AT: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/rr/rr5910.pdf>

## What can I do to avoid/prepare?

- Anything that strengthens the immune system may help avoid or minimize colonization at delivery. Shonda Parker, in *The Naturally Healthy Pregnancy*, recommends 500 - 1,000 mg. of Echinacea three times daily or 2 ml. of tincture/tincture three times daily for one or two weeks, followed by an "Echinacea break" for two or three days and a repeat of the dosage for two more weeks. **BE SURE NEVER TO USE ECHINACEA WITH GOLDENSEAL WHILE PREGNANT.**
- See Aviva Romm article in this section and online at: <https://avivaromm.com/group-b-strep-gbs-in-pregnancy-whats-a-mom-to-do/>