

Chlorhexidine (Hibiclens) Protocol For Labor Among GBS Positive Women

by Danelle Frisbie © 2009



In pregnancy, as in labor and birth, you have options. It is your choice whether or not you will be tested for GBS during pregnancy. If you are attending a typical obstetrical practice in the United States, you will likely be pressured (or told you MUST) test for GBS (even though your results will change depending on the day and may not be the same during labor as they are on the day you are tested). You will likely be told that if you decline the tests, you will receive IV antibiotics during labor in the hospital - just in case you are GBS positive. If you would like to ensure a negative result during your OB visit (so as not to receive antibiotics in the hospital during labor) you can use Hibiclens within 6 hours of your GBS test for negative results.

No matter where you plan to birth, (home, birthing center, hospital) if you elect to test for GBS and the results are positive, you also have options other than automatic antibiotics. The likelihood of a baby being harmed by a GBS positive birth is very, very unlikely. In fact, there is a greater chance of antibiotics having negative consequences on your little one than GBS. But other alternative options exist as well, and the one backed by the most research is the use of chlorhexadine (Hibiclens) during labor.

A recent homebirth midwife shared, "I use a Hibiclens (chlorhexadine) protocol for vaginal washes which is the European protocol for treating GBS. Basically 0.5 oz of Hibiclens in 7.5 oz of warm water, mixed in a peri-bottle gently squirted into the vagina every six hours in labor. There is loads of data to support its effectiveness equal to the IV antibiotics protocol in use in the USA, but this research is totally ignored here due to the widespread use of IV in labor in the United States. After all, it can't possibly be any good if it is from Europe!"

Chlorhexidine (Hibiclens) Protocol for Labor

Chlorhexidine vaginal wash at the onset of labor or at rupture of membranes, whichever comes first, repeated every six hours.

Method:

- 2 Tbsp Hibiclens (4% chlorhexidine solution) mixed with 20 oz sterile water.
- You may be most comfortable in a squatting or sitting position (even on the toilet) or laying down with your hips slightly elevated.
- Put 4oz of the mixture into a periwash bottle. Use the entire amount for each application.
- Slowly instill the solution into the vagina under very gentle pressure using a peribottle.
- Begin at onset of labor or ROM and repeat every six hours.
- A woman can self administer the vaginal flush, and her spouse/partner can assist as well if she wishes.

References

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