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Obstetrical Anesthesia

EARLY VS. LATE CORD CLAMPING The effects of early and late clamping of the umbilical cord on postpartum bleeding, duration of the third stage of labor, and the incidence of placental retention were studied in 117 mothers. Postpartum bleeding and retained placentae occurred with significantly greater frequency in mothers of infants whose umbilical cords were clamped early. These findings were not related to over-distention of the uterus, medications, or soft-tissue injury. No differences were found in the third stage of labor. (*Walsh, S. Z.: Maternal Effects of Early and Late Clamping of the Umbilical Cord, Lancet* 1: 996 (May) 1968.)

FETAL DEPRESSION Simultaneous monitoring of maternal and fetal EEG in the guinea pig allows one to study placental drug transfer. EEG changes in the fetus appeared within 60 sec of the appearance of similar changes in the maternal EEG following maternal intravenous, intramuscular or intraperitoneal injection of meperidine. Following fetal intramuscular or intraperitoneal injection, rapid transfer to the maternal brain was also documented. This study has special interest because it demonstrates that meperidine, administered to a pregnant patient, has fetal as well as neonatal depressant effects. (*Rosen, M. G., and Bleyer, W. A.: Bidirectional Transfer of Meperidine Across the Guinea Pig Placenta, Amer. J. Obstet. Gynec.* 101: 918 (Aug.) 1968.)