Practical Evidence About Real Life Situations

Longer-treatment regimen more effective for asymptomatic bacteriuria during pregnancy

Clinical question
What is the most effective duration of treatment for asymptomatic bacteriuria during pregnancy?

Bottom line
In terms of cure rate (negative culture after treatment), a 1-day regimen was significantly less effective than a 7-day regimen. There was no statistically significant difference in the recurrence rate of asymptomatic bacteriuria between treatment and control groups. Slight differences were detected for preterm births and pyelonephritis, although, apart from 1 trial, the sample size of the trials was inadequate. Single-dose treatment was associated with a decrease in reports of “any side effects”.

Caveat
In general, the trials lacked evidence of sufficient rigour in the design, conduct and analysis of results. The poor methodological quality of these trials may obscure any important clinical and laboratory differences between duration of treatment regimens.

Context
Asymptomatic bacteriuria is common in pregnancy. A Cochrane systematic review has shown drug treatment of asymptomatic bacteriuria in pregnant women substantially decreases the risk of pyelonephritis and reduces the risk of preterm delivery. However, it is not clear whether single-dose therapy is as effective as longer, conventional, antibiotic treatment.

Cochrane Systematic Review

Reference

PEARLS are succinct summaries of Cochrane Systematic Reviews for primary care practitioners – developed by the Cochrane Primary Care Field, New Zealand Branch of the Australasian Cochrane Centre at the Department of General Practice and Primary Health Care, University of Auckland and funded by the New Zealand Guidelines Group. New Zealanders can access the Cochrane Library free via www.nzgg.org.nz

PEARLS provide guidance on whether a treatment is effective or ineffective. PEARLS are prepared as an educational resource and do not replace clinician judgement in the management of individual cases. View PEARLS online at: www.nzdoctor.co.nz; www.nzgg.org.nz; www.cochraneprimarycare.org