

## Elective Cesarean Delivery: Does It Have a Negative Effect on Breastfeeding?

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### Abstract

Cesarean delivery has negative effects on breastfeeding. The Background: objective of this study was to evaluate breastfeeding rates, defined in months accordance with World Health Organization guidelines, from delivery to 6 postpartum in infants born by elective and emergency cesarean section and in Delivery modalities were assessed in relation infants born vaginally. Methods: to breastfeeding patterns in 2,137 term infants delivered at a tertiary center, the Padua University School of Medicine in northeastern Italy, from January to December 2007. The study population included 677 (31.1%) newborns delivered by cesarean section, 398 (18.3%) by elective cesarean, 279 (12.8%) by emergency Breastfeeding cesarean section, and 1,496 (68.8%) delivered vaginally. Results: prevalence in the delivery room was significantly higher after vaginal delivery compared with that after cesarean delivery (71.5% vs 3.5%,  $p < 0.001$ ), and a longer interval occurred between birth and first breastfeeding in the newborns  $9 \pm 5$  vs  $10.4 \pm 3.1$  SD, hours,  $p < 0.05$ ). No difference was found in breastfeeding rates between the elective and emergency cesarean groups. Compared with elective cesarean delivery, vaginal delivery was associated with a higher breastfeeding rate at mo of mo, and 6 days, 3 discharge and at the subsequent follow-up steps (7 Emergency and elective cesarean deliveries are similarly life). Conclusions: associated with a decreased rate of exclusive breastfeeding compared with vaginal delivery. The inability of women who have undergone a cesarean section to breastfeed comfortably in the delivery room and in the immediate postpartum period seems to be the most likely explanation for this association. (BIRTH 37:4 December 2010).