

## **NZCOM CONSENSUS STATEMENT**

### ***Vitamin K***

*This Consensus Statement was ratified at the NZCOM AGM 27 September 2000*

**The New Zealand College of Midwives (Inc) recognises the administration of Vitamin K as a prophylactic intervention in the prevention of Haemorrhagic Disease of the Newborn.**

**Midwives should ensure the woman is informed and supported to reach her own decision on whether Vitamin K is to be given intra-muscularly, orally or not at all.**

**The underlying principle of informed choice and consent must always be upheld in discussion with the woman, and in the administration of Vitamin K to her baby.**

**When the woman declines or accepts the administration of Vitamin K, documentation should include a statement to this effect.**

**The New Zealand College of Midwives considers further research is needed into the efficacy and safety of Vitamin K administration.**

#### **Guidelines**

During the antenatal period, the woman should be provided with current research based information in relation to Vitamin K administration to her baby following birth. Aspects regarding the woman's health to be considered at this time are:

- Woman on anti-convulsant therapy
- Woman on anti-coagulant therapy
- Woman who is currently on or who has had antibiotic therapy during pregnancy or whilst breastfeeding
- Woman on anti-tuberculosis therapy

When the woman has chosen antenatally not to give her baby Vitamin K, the midwife must consider the situations during labour and birth that may affect this decision.

- Woman on anti-convulsant therapy
- Premature infants (less than 36 weeks gestation)
- Birth Asphyxia
- Traumatic deliveries
- Known hepatic disease

Midwives need to ensure that women are aware of the symptoms of Haemorrhagic Disease of the Newborn whether or not a baby has been given Vitamin K.

- Malaena or bleeding from the bowel
- Blood stained vomit or significant haematemesis
- Significant bleeding from umbilicus or other areas
- Impaired neurological response
- Less responsive behaviour
- Nose bleeding
- Unusual bruising

## References

Title: Childhood cancer, intramuscular Vitamin K and Pethidine given during labour  
Authors: Golding J, Greenwood R, Birmingham K and Others  
Source: British Medical Journal, Vol 305, No. 6849, 8 August 1992, Pg 341-346

Title: Administration of Vitamin K to newborn infants and childhood cancer  
Author: Hans Ekelund, Orvar Finnstrom, Jan Gunnarskog, Bengt Kallen, Yngve Larsson  
Source: British Medical Journal, Vol 307, 10 July 1993, Pg 89-91

Title: Position Paper 13b: Vitamin K  
Author: Royal College of Midwives (RCM)  
Source: RCM Midwives Journal, vol 2, No 8, August 1999, pp 252-253

Title: Prevention of Vitamin K deficiency bleeding in newborn  
Author: Zipursky, A  
Source: British Journal of Haematology, 1999; 104 403-7

Title: Vitamin K in Relation to Haemorrhagic Disease of the Newborn  
Author: Joan Donley  
Source: New Zealand College of Midwives Journal, December 1992, Pg 17-18

Title: Vitamin K Prophylaxis in the Newborn  
Author: Foetus and Newborn Committee, NZCOM, NZNO and MOH, May 2000  
Source: NZCOM Head Office, PO Box 21106, Christchurch

***NB: The word “woman” used throughout includes her partner/family/whanau.***

This Consensus Statement was updated and ratified at the New Zealand College of Midwives Annual General Meeting held on 27 September 2000.

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The purpose of the New Zealand College of Midwives Consensus Statements is to provide women, midwives and the maternity services with the profession's position on any given situation. The guidelines are designed to educate and support best practice.

All position statements are regularly reviewed and updated in line with evidence-based practice.