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Midwifery-Led Care and Practice

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Despite continuous advances in medicine, healthcare and society, pregnancy and birth are often characterized by vulnerability. In developing countries (but also in industrialized countries such as the USA), reducing maternal and infant mortality remains a key challenge. Even in industrialized countries, pregnancy and birth outcomes are clearly dependent on the social status of pregnant women, due to different levels of health literacy and different perceptions of health rights. This results in phases of vulnerability, which, according to study results, affect more than 30% of all pregnant women as distress, with insufficiently understood long-term effects on the health of the mother and child (fetal programming). Continuous midwifery care, which is based on the principles of evidence-based care but follows a holistic approach that also emphasizes the social causes of illness and health, can mitigate social inequalities in care and improve short- and long-term outcomes. Against this background, the WHO and UN have identified midwives as key actors in improving women's health. This Reprint contains scientific articles on innovative projects in midwifery care that focus on improving the health of mothers and children. The topics are exceptionally diverse and include both original articles from health services research and educational research, as well as reviews on a wide range of topics that address various factors influencing health during the reproductive phase or evaluate the evidence for interventions aimed at improving women's health during pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period.



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