

## Psychical Impacts of Episiotomy: First Results

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**Abstract :** Considered as the most common surgical procedure worldwide, episiotomy can be defined as an incision around the vulva performed to enlarge it, in the aim of preventing the traumatic rupture of the perineum during childbirth. Rather mediatised, this practice raises many questions in the field of mental health, relayed by different users and health professionals. Today, its topicality is moderately hectic since many queries about the prophylactic exercise of episiotomy are subject to a relative consensus, particularly since WHO advocated in 1996 that only 10% of childbirths should involve an episiotomy. This indicator appeared after the publication of numerous results from randomized clinical trials. Unfortunately, these papers seem mostly centered about somatic impacts of episiotomy. From the side of psychological studies, they mostly integrate a major clinical methodological bias, especially considering that every primiparous woman is identical to the others face to the experience of parturition. In the aim to fill this lack of knowledge, we developed a longitudinal research starting in the 7th month of pregnancy and ending one year after delivery. We are studying in a comparative way different possible psychological consequences inherent to the use of episiotomy. To do this, we use a standardized methodology which combines semi-structured clinical interviews (IRMAG, IRMAN ...), free clinical interviews, a projective test (Rorschach) and five questionnaires (QIC, EPDS, CPQ WOMBLSQ4, SF36). Therefore, we can comprehend with shrewdness the question of psychic impacts of episiotomy in a qualitative and quantitative way by comparing it to other obstetric interventions. In this paper, we will present the first results obtained about a population of twenty-two primiparous women by focusing on body image, sexuality, quality of life, depressive affects, post-traumatic stress disorder and investment of the maternal role. Finally, we will consider the different implications and perspectives of this research which could improve the public health policies in the field of perinatal care.

**Keywords :** assessment, episiotomy, mental health, psychical impacts

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