

[Delivery in Water: The Field Report of 51 Cases]

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[Abstract] Aim To understand the benefits and the adverse effects of waterbirth especially in pain relief and birth safety among Chinese women. **Methods** During March 1 and November 1, 2003, fifty-one pregnant women were enrolled as volunteers to have waterbirth in Shanghai Changning Maternity and Children Hospital. The criteria for the enrolment were (1) all pregnant women in active labor with cervical dilatation 5 cm or more; (2) no fetopelvic disproportion; (3) no fetal distress; (4) with written consent. Another fifty-one women with low risk, at term ($\geq 37w$) and cephalic presentation were randomly selected as a control group with comparable factors such as maternal age, weight, length, duration of gestation, and neonatal weight. **Results** There was no significant difference of labor progress and the maternal hemoglobin changes between the two groups. The usage of analgesia and the episiotomy operation showed a bigger dropping in bathing group (8/51) than in controls (24/51) as well as the score of pain degree ($P < 0.01$). One bathing woman persisted a postpartum fever (39°C) for a day with unknown reasons. There was no evidence to show the neonatal asphyxia or fetal distress in all newborn babies. **Conclusions** It was necessary to have more data to evaluate both benefits and adverse effects of delivery in water.