A retrospective audit of fetal compromise during cervical ripening with a Foley’s catheter in a large Western Australian tertiary referral hospital

Melody S, Chambers J, Griffin C
King Edward Memorial Hospital, Subiaco, Australia

Objective
The safety of Foley catheter for cervical ripening.

Methods
Retrospective case note study.

Results
168 files were examined where fetal distress occurred with the use of a foley catheter for induction of labour. There were 27 cases of fetal distress documented within 12 hours of FC insertion and 141 cases of fetal distress 12 hours post foley catheter insertion. In 26 of the 27 cases with documented fetal distress within 12 hours of FC insertion there was evidence of an antenatal risk factor or adverse pre-induction assessment to explain the observed early fetal distress. The remaining one case was due to bleeding within one hour of insertion of the foley catheter.

Conclusion
Using strict patient inclusion criteria and combining our safety data with other studies, a foley catheter is a safe option for outpatient cervical ripening.