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Mechanical birth-related trauma to the neonate: An imaging perspective

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Mechanical birth-related injuries to the neonate are declining in incidence with advances in prenatal diagnosis and care. These injuries, however, continue to represent an important source of morbidity and mortality in the affected patient population. In the United States, these injuries are estimated to occur among 2.6% of births. Although more usual in context of existing fetomaternal risk factors, their occurrence can be unpredictable. While often superficial and temporary, functional and cosmetic sequelae, disability or even death can result as a consequence of birth-related injuries. The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) in the USA has developed, through expert consensus, patient safety indicators which include seven types of birth-related injuries including subdural and intracerebral haemorrhage, epicranial subaponeurotic haemorrhage, skeletal injuries, injuries to spine and spinal cord, peripheral and cranial nerve injuries and other types of specified and non-specified birth trauma. Understandably, birth-related injuries are a source of great concern for parents and clinician. Many of these injuries have imaging manifestations. This presentation seeks to familiarize the audience with the clinical spectrum, significance and multimodality imaging appearances of neonatal multi-organ birth-related trauma and its sequelae, where applicable.

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