

Preface

Management of First and Second Stages of Labor



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Guest Editor

For both patient and the practitioner, few things are as dramatic and rewarding as childbirth. After months of anticipation and careful antepartum care, labor is the last phase of pregnancy in which prudent decisions can improve outcome. With over 130 million births in the world, 4 million of which occur in the United States, it is imperative that the clinicians are current on the recent developments of intrapartum management. This collection of 13 articles, written by clinicians, researchers, academicians, and private practitioners, updates the management of the first, second, and third stages of labor. The book is intended for medical students, labor and delivery nurses, residents, midwives, and obstetricians who try to optimize the outcome of each delivery.

The first two articles describe the mechanisms of normal labor and with abnormal presentations. The next three provide clinically relevant information on induction, abnormalities of stages I and II, and active management of labor. The sixth article focuses on analgesia and anesthesia. We intentionally devoted two articles to intrapartum assessment of the fetus to provide different perspectives on a very important issue. Intrapartum complications—chorioamnionitis, non-reassuring fetal heart rate tracing, and shoulder dystocia—are discussed, and their management is described in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh articles. The last two articles concern episiotomy and management of the third stage of labor.

Though obvious, it is worth acknowledging the hours of scholarly work by the authors of the articles, and the considerable support by Carin Davis and the staff at Elsevier is refreshing.

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