How to Lower Perinatal Mortality?

**Perinatal Care in Japan**

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Objective. To review the 30-year history of perinatal medical care in Japan, and the recently initiated regionalization system of perinatal centers, new technologies and treatments in obstetric and neonatal medicine developed in Japan.


Laboratory Data. Serological assay and immunohistochemical staining employing TKH-2 antibody for the diagnosis of amniotic fluid embolism, and assaying granulocyte elastase as a specific inflammatory marker in mucous samples from the uterine cervical canal for the prediction of preterm labor or premature rupture of membranes.

Treatments. Urinary trypsin inhibitor (Urinastatin) for the prevention of preterm delivery, and a double-blind, placebo-controlled, randomized trial of antithrombin-III therapy in severe preeclampsia.

Conclusion. Over the last 30 years, the statistical data of perinatal health care, such as maternal and perinatal mortality rates, have markedly improved in Japan. These results are supported by the advanced technologies and newly developed treatments in obstetric and neonatal medicine. The regionalization of perinatal centers, a national project in order to assure a systematic collaboration among primary, secondary, and tertiary centers, has just started in Japan. It also aims at systematization of the function of perinatal centers on the national level through the informative promoting action.

Keywords: elastase; embolism, amniotic fluid; fetal membranes, premature rupture; granulocytes; infant mortality; perinatal care; trypsin inhibitors

Received: March 11, 1998
Accepted: March 23, 1998

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