

Wessex Intrapartum Care Network Pathways No 3: Tocolysis in threatened preterm labour – Nov 2024

Consider current NICU status - would tocolysis assist with cot availability?

Threatened / actual preterm labour with intact membranes

Check for: PPROM / chorioamnionitis / abruption / cardiac disease / APH

Yes

Tocolysis may / may not be indicated; discuss with Consultant Obstetrician

No

Time needed for steroids / IUT / MgSO₄?

No

Offer tocolysis - gestational weeks 26+0 - 33+6

Consider tocolysis - gestational weeks 23+0 - 25+6

Yes

Choice of tocolysis as per local regime

NIFEDIPINE

- Loading and maintenance
- Regimen based on local protocol (IR or MR)

ATOSIBAN

- Regimen*
If nifedipine is contraindicated

Side effects

- Headaches
- Tachycardia
- Palpitations
- Peripheral oedema
- Facial flushing

Contraindications

- Cardia disease incl arrhythmias
- Hypotension
- Chorioamnionitis
- IUD
- Cervical dilatation ≥4cm
- Lethal fetal malformation
- Pathological CTG
- Eclampsia / PET / APH that require delivery
- Uncontrolled DM, hepatic / renal failure = relative contraindications

Cautions

Pharmaceutical interactions - check BNF, alongside MgSO₄ - risk of hypotension / neuromuscular blockade

CONSIDER

- Corticosteroid administration
- In-utero transfer
- MgSO₄
- Intrapartum antibiotics
- Ultrasound scan
 - Presentation
 - Estimated fetal weight
 - Sex of baby (BAPM)

At 48 hours

Senior obstetric review - ? continued admission or discharge

Monitoring on tocolysis

Perform

- Continuous monitoring (CTG) if >26+0
- Maternal observations as per care in labour guidance

Until uterine activity ≤1:10 and sustained at this for at least 30 minutes

Atosiban Regimen*

- IV bolus 6.75mg over 1 minute, then
- IV infusion 18mg/hr (24ml/hr) for 3 hours, then
- IV infusion 6mg/hr (8ml/hr) for 45 hours

Total duration not to exceed 48 hours - discontinue at 12 hours if no uterine activity or cervix ≥4cm

Side effects
Nausea and vomiting, tachycardia
hypotension, dizziness, hot flushes, hyperglycaemia

References:

NICE (NG25) Preterm labour and birth
BNF Atosiban / Nifedipine