

## Misoprostol for treatment of postpartum hemorrhage

While a very small body of evidence supports use of misoprostol for treatment of PPH, further research is needed to recommend the drug as an alternative to oxytocin. To that end, Gynuity Health Projects, in collaboration with investigators in Burkina Faso, Ecuador, Egypt, Turkey and Vietnam, are conducting a clinical trial to explore the effectiveness of misoprostol for the treatment of primary PPH in tertiary care facilities.

The study is a double-blind, placebo-controlled, randomized trial of 800 mcg of sublingual misoprostol versus IV oxytocin, the standard first-line treatment in many hospital settings. Women with PPH are randomized to receive either 800 mcg sublingual misoprostol and IV placebo resembling oxytocin (saline), or placebo pills resembling misoprostol and 40 IU oxytocin via IV to treat their condition. Blood loss after delivery, pre-delivery hemoglobin and sociodemographic information are being collected for all women delivering vaginally at participating hospitals. In addition, providers are asked to record components of active management of the third stage of labor used for each delivery. As of December 2006, more than 16,000 women have been enrolled in the study, of which approximately 1,000 experienced postpartum hemorrhage. Women experiencing PPH have additional data collected that will enable the study team to assess drug safety profiles, reported side effects, acceptability among study participants, and the feasibility of integrating misoprostol into obstetric services.

### *Outcome measures include:*

- need for additional intervention after initial PPH treatment;
- mean blood loss after PPH diagnosis;
- time to bleeding cessation;
- change in hemoglobin from pre-delivery to postpartum;
- use of blood transfusion;
- side effects; and
- acceptability for women and providers.

Details about this study can be found on the U.S. National Institutes of Health website [www.ClinicalTrials.gov](http://www.ClinicalTrials.gov).

For further information about this initiative, please contact:

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