Fetal Feces Enter the Respiratory Tract and Lungs

The most common group of life-threatening diseases in infants is respiratory problems, and one of these respiratory diseases that may affect the baby, and is more common in infants born after 42 weeks of gestation is meconium aspiration syndrome.

Meconium is the baby's first stool that is made up of fluid around the fetus, bile, and cells shed from the skin and gastrointestinal tract. This stool is thick and sticky and dark green and may be seen in the fluid around the fetus after 34 weeks of pregnancy. During pregnancy, the fetus floats in this fluid.

Fecal entry into the lungs occurs when the fetus in the uterus of the mother or baby enters the lungs with the first breath after birth, which causes the airway to become blocked, resulting in difficult breathing for the baby.

In addition, this stool is a stimulant and can cause infections in the baby's lungs. Fecal entry into the lungs is a common cause of neonatal respiratory problems and is seen in 5 to 10% of pregnancies.

The examination of the fluid around the fetus after birth to see if it is contaminated with feces or not, and examination of the respiratory problem in the baby can reveal the existence of this disease.

Risk factors:

Risk factors include maternal diabetes, maternal hypertension, difficult delivery, fetal respiratory problems, and decreased oxygen supply to the fetus.

Prevention:

Risk factors should be identified as soon as possible. Inform your doctor if your baby's stools are in the fluid around the fetus or if there are green spots or streaks when the amniotic sac ruptures.

Symptoms:

- The baby's skin is infected with green meconium.
- Difficulty breathing (baby struggling to breathe)
- A dent in the baby's sternum
- She/He was loose at birth
- Blackening and bruising of the baby's skin
- Rapid breathing of the baby

Treatment and care:

Most babies with the disease recover within a few days, depending on the severity and amount of stool that enters the lungs. Respiratory problems usually improve within 3 to 4 days, although rapid breathing may continue for several days. To treat this disease, the baby must be hospitalized and monitored in the intensive care ward. In case of weakness and inability to breathe, an artificial respiration device may be used for the baby, so that the baby can breathe well.
The baby may develop wheezing and lung infections during the first year of life, so you, dear parents, should do your best in terms of respiratory care for the baby, or observe the baby's shortness of breath and inform a doctor immediately.

If you have any questions or ambiguities, call the following number:
023-33463401-2, NICU of Amir-al-Momenin Hospital