Neonatal Emergencies: Causes and Management of Preterm Birth, Neonatal Sepsis, Birth Asphyxia, and Congenital Anomalies – A Narrative Review

Kapila Kumari, Lalita Yadav

Department of Nursing, Seedling School of Nursing, Jaipur National University, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

Abstract

Neonatal emergencies remain a significant global health challenge and are among the leading causes of neonatal morbidity and mortality, particularly in resource-limited settings. This narrative review examines the causes, clinical implications, management approaches, and preventive strategies associated with four major neonatal emergencies: Preterm birth, neonatal sepsis, birth asphyxia, and congenital anomalies. The reviewed literature indicates that preterm birth is a major contributor to neonatal complications due to physiological immaturity, while neonatal sepsis continues to cause substantial mortality owing to difficulties in early diagnosis and timely treatment. Birth asphyxia is strongly associated with neonatal death and long-term neurological impairment, highlighting the importance of prompt recognition and effective resuscitation. Congenital anomalies also represent a considerable burden, contributing to neonatal mortality and lifelong disability and often require early detection and multidisciplinary management. Overall, the findings emphasize that improved antenatal care, early diagnosis, evidence-based clinical interventions, timely emergency management, and strengthened neonatal healthcare systems are essential for reducing adverse outcomes. In conclusion, comprehensive preventive measures and coordinated neonatal care play a crucial role in improving survival, reducing complications, and enhancing long-term health outcomes among newborns affected by these critical conditions.

Keywords: Birth asphyxia, congenital anomalies, neonatal emergencies, neonatal management, neonatal sepsis, preterm birth