

# Maternal acceptability of screening for congenital heart diseases

Sir,

Pulse oximetry (PO) along with clinical examination is a sensitive and cost-effective screening tool for congenital heart defects (CHDs) in neonates and also has the advantage of identifying other significant neonatal conditions as secondary targets. However, in India, CHD screening with PO and clinical examination is not universally implemented. There are few studies on the role of PO screening of CHD in term newborns in India, but there are no studies on maternal acceptability. We wish to evaluate the maternal acceptability of CHD screening of term newborns.

## METHODS

A total of 1009 term newborns were screened for CHD in a tertiary care hospital. After screening, a five-point Likert scale questionnaire was provided to 200 randomly selected mothers, regardless of the screen result. We assessed mothers' perceptions regarding CHD screening using PO as per the American Heart Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines<sup>[1]</sup> along with clinical examination.

The questionnaire was based on the questionnaire that was used in the PO study in the UK and a study by Narayen *et al.*<sup>[2,3]</sup> The questionnaire was translated into the local language Kannada, to assess the perception of mothers regarding stress or anxiety felt by mothers during PO screening and the opinion of mothers regarding the importance of PO screening.

## RESULTS

The majority (96%) of the mothers were happy with the way the test was performed and 91% did not feel any anxiety during the test. Most (90%) mothers agreed baby was comfortable while screening and the majority (97%) opined it was important for the well-being of their baby and other babies as well and 96% expressed that they would recommend the test for others as well [Table 1].

## CONCLUSION

On evaluating the acceptability of mothers regarding CHD screening with PO along with a clinical examination of their newborns, most of them were satisfied with the screening procedure with no stress or anxiety, perceived it as an important test, and agreed that they would recommend it to others.

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### Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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**Table 1: Maternal perception of congenital heart disease screening**

	Strongly agree/ definitely yes	Agree/ probably yes	Neutral/do not know	Disagree/ probably no	Strongly agree/ definitely no	Total
Happy with how the screening done	120 (60)	70 (35)	6 (3)	2 (1)	2 (1)	200 (100)
Baby comfortable during screening	114 (57)	76 (38)	2 (1)	2 (1)	6 (3)	200 (100)
Did not feel anxious	120 (60)	62 (31)	6 (3)	6 (3)	6 (3)	200 (100)
Screening important for my baby	100 (50)	80 (40)	12 (6)	2 (1)	6 (3)	200 (100)
Screening important for other babies	102 (51)	92 (46)	2 (1)	2 (1)	2 (1)	200 (100)
Will recommend screening of CHD	122 (61)	70 (35)	4 (2)	2 (1)	2 (1)	200 (100)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages. CHD: Congenital heart defects

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