

ST analysis as an adjunct to electronic fetal monitoring: an overview.

Amer-Wåhlin I, Miller LA.

Institute of Women and Child Health, Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, Sweden.

Conventional electronic fetal monitoring in the United States has value as a screening tool but is extremely limited as a diagnostic tool. ST analysis was developed as an adjunctive technology, able to measure changes in the ST segment of the fetal electrocardiogram during periods of hypoxia, improving the identification of the fetus at risk for metabolic acidemia at birth. Currently used only in a handful of hospitals in the United States, studies abroad have demonstrated that an integrated approach utilizing electronic fetal monitoring, ST analysis, and standardized guidelines in a selected patient population can improve neonatal outcome, decrease acidemia at birth, and decrease obstetric operative delivery. Research is needed to determine whether similar results are possible in the US population.