

What is an Epulis?

Epulis is a benign tumor that is formed in the mouth of your baby. Most of the times this lesion is small, but other times it can grow and obstruct the airway of the baby. In this case, your baby could have breathing and/or feeding problems. The diagnosis during pregnancy is made by an ultrasound and after this it is crucial that your baby be followed by a group of specialists.

How does an Epulis happen?

It is not exactly clear why an Epulis occurs, but some theories have been described. It is a very rare condition that happens in about 0.0006% of the population. Some investigators proposed that a disorganized growth of cells in the mouth leads to the development of this mass, while other authors believe that maternal hormones may play a role.

What are the things to watch for during the pregnancy?

Babies with epulis could have some problems with their breathing and feeding if the mass is too big. In most of the cases the tumour is of small size, and, in some patients, it disappears by itself. The ultrasound will help identify if the tumour is compromising other structures of the baby and in this way will help to establish an appropriate delivery plan.

Could my baby have another associated malformation?

No. Most of the cases, epulis is not associated with other malformations.

If I have another baby, is it going to have an epulis too?

No. The probability of having another baby with epulis is very low. There is no evidence that shows this lesion has a genetic predisposition.

What does it mean for my baby after it is born?

Sometimes, babies that have a diagnosis of epulis may need a special delivery plan. A specific procedure for delivery, called an EXIT procedure should be made if the mass is compromising the correct breathing of your baby. Your doctor will discuss the details of this procedure, should it be deemed necessary after evaluation of the mass, its location, growth, and influence on other structures. This is the reason why once the diagnosis is made by ultrasonography your baby must be examined by a maternal fetal specialist.

The baby often requires a surgical procedure to remove the tumour from the oral cavity. In some cases, when the lesion is small, it can disappear on its own.

Will it happen again?

If the surgical procedure is successful, the tumour will not regrow again in the mouth of your baby.

What other questions should I ask?

- Where should I deliver?
- How is the procedure to secure the breathing of my baby performed during delivery?
- Where will the baby receive the best care after it is born?
- Can I meet the team of doctors that will be assisting my baby when it is born in advance?

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