

BACKGROUND

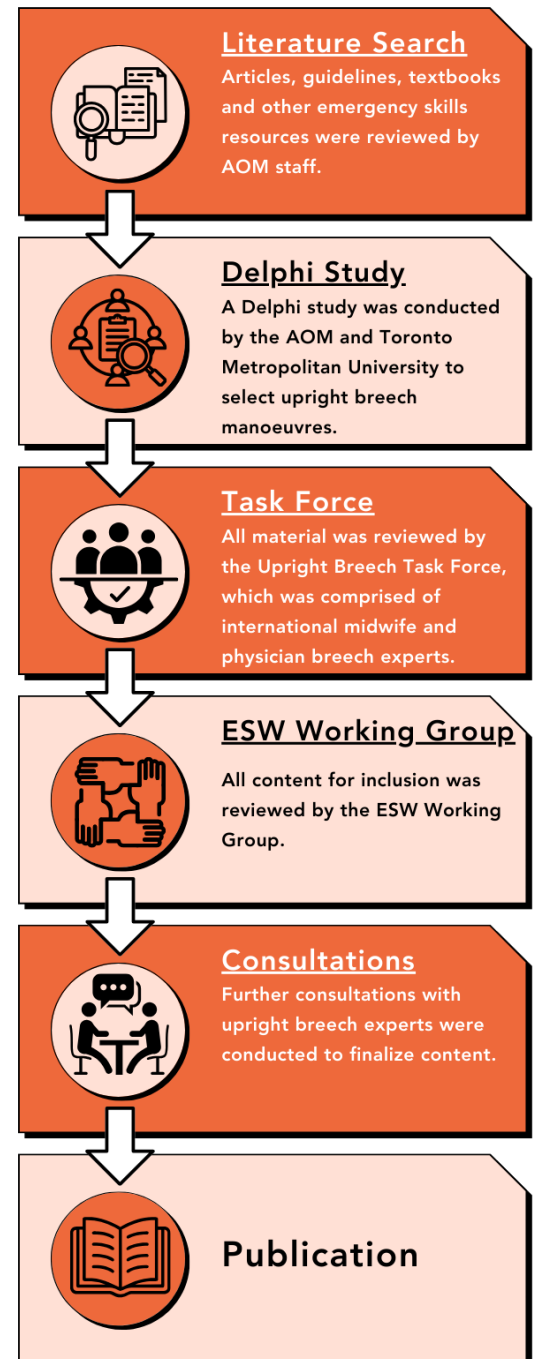
UPRIGHT BREECH IN THE 8TH EDITION ESW MANUAL

While limited, research on the upright position for breech birth shows promising results, suggesting that upright breech may reduce fetal or neonatal morbidity, incidence of birth injury and the need for manoeuvres. (1,2)

While some texts, guidelines and emergency skills manuals have started to describe the upright breech position as an alternative to semi-recumbent, there is a lack of clarity regarding the critical manoeuvres for this position, especially for inexperienced practitioners in an unplanned setting.

In 2023, the Association of Ontario Midwives, in collaboration with Toronto Metropolitan University sought to address existing research gaps by using the Delphi study method to survey upright vaginal breech birth experts worldwide. The study sought to establish consensus on critical manoeuvres that providers who are trained, but inexperienced in upright breech ought to learn to manage an unplanned breech in the upright position, particularly in out-of-hospital settings. A group of midwives and obstetricians with combined experience of more than 1000 upright breech births in various practice settings (home, birth centre and hospital) completed the survey. The study results informed the selection and inclusion of interventions and manoeuvres for managing complications of the upright breech position in the 8th edition ESW manual. The management of upright breech birth and the descriptions for manoeuvres were further refined by an international task force made up of midwife and physician upright breech experts.

The establishment of critical manoeuvres and interventions for upright breech adds to the emerging body of research on this subject and increases midwives' capabilities and confidence when managing an unplanned breech in the upright position, particularly in the out-of-hospital settings.



1. Louwen F, Daviss B, Johnson KC, Reitter A. Does breech delivery in an upright position instead of on the back improve outcomes and avoid cesareans? *Int J Gynaecol Obstet* [Internet]. 2017 Feb;136(2):151-61
2. Bogner G, Strobl M, Schausberger C, Fischer T, Reisenberger K, Jacobs VR. Breech delivery in the all fours position: a prospective observational comparative study with classic assistance. *J Perinat Med* [Internet]. 2015 Nov 1 [cited 2016 Nov 24];43(6):707-13.