

A 14-day-old male infant is brought to the emergency department due to spasms involving the whole body. He has been having very poor suckling over the last couple of days. He was delivered vaginally by an untrained birth attendant, and his mother never sought any pre- or antenatal care. The pertinent physical finding is a swollen and erythematous umbilical cord. What is the most likely diagnosis of this patient?

- ☐ A. Congenital syphilis
- ☐ B. Group B streptococcal infection
- ☐ C. Congenital rubella
- ☐ D. Toxoplasmosis
- ☐ E. Rabies
- ☐ F. Staphylococcus aureus infection
- ☐ G. E.coli infection
- ☐ H. Botulism
- ☐ I. Listeria meningitis
- ☐ J. Diphtheria
- ☐ K. Measles
- ☐ L. Aseptic meningitis
- ☐ M. Febrile seizures
- ☐ N. Grand mal epilepsy
- ☐ O. Tetanus

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- ☐ A. Congenital syphilis [2%]
- ☐ B. Group B streptococcal infection [22%]
- ☐ C. Congenital rubella [1%]
- ☐ D. Toxoplasmosis [2%]
- ☐ E. Rabies [0%]
- ☐ F. Staphylococcus aureus infection [7%]
- ☐ G. E.coli infection [1%]
- ☐ H. Botulism [4%]
- ☐ I. Listeria meningitis [3%]
- ☐ J. Diphtheria [1%]
- ☐ K. Measles [0%]
- ☐ L. Aseptic meningitis [1%]
- ☐ M. Febrile seizures [4%]
- ☐ N. Grand mal epilepsy [1%]
- ☒ O. Tetanus [52%]

[Proceed to Next Item](#)

Explanation:

User Id: [REDACTED]

Tetanus is an infection of the nervous system, and is characterized by muscle spasms and hypertonicity. The causative agent is *Clostridium tetani*, which produces a powerful toxin called tetanospasmin. Four clinical types of tetanus are recognized: generalized, localized, cephalic, and neonatal. The patient in this case has neonatal tetanus.

Neonatal tetanus is often generalized and invariably fatal, if left untreated. It is a significant problem in developing countries. It is commonly seen in infants born to unimmunized mothers, frequently following umbilical stump infection due to poor obstetric procedures, inadequate postnatal care, or cultural practices (i.e., application of cow dung or soil to the umbilical stump). The onset is generally within the first two weeks of birth, and is characterized by poor suckling and fatigue followed by rigidity, spasms and

- ☐ E. Rabies [0%]
- ☐ F. Staphylococcus aureus infection [7%]
- ☐ G. E.coli infection [1%]
- ☐ H. Botulism [4%]
- ☐ I. Listeria meningitis [3%]
- ☐ J. Diphtheria [1%]
- ☐ K. Measles [0%]
- ☐ L. Aseptic meningitis [1%]
- ☐ M. Febrile seizures [4%]
- ☐ N. Grand mal epilepsy [1%]
- ☒ O. Tetanus [52%]

[Proceed to Next Item](#)**Explanation:**

User Id: [REDACTED]

Tetanus is an infection of the nervous system, and is characterized by muscle spasms and hypertonicity. The causative agent is *Clostridium tetani*, which produces a powerful toxin called tetanospasmin. Four clinical types of tetanus are recognized: generalized, localized, cephalic, and neonatal. The patient in this case has neonatal tetanus.

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Educational Objective:

Neonatal tetanus is generally seen in infants born to unimmunized mothers, frequently following umbilical stump infection. Affected infants initially present in the first two weeks of life with poor suckling and fatigue, followed by rigidity, spasms and opisthotonus.

Time Spent: 2 seconds

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