



The American College of
Obstetricians and Gynecologists
WOMEN'S HEALTH CARE PHYSICIANS

Definition of “Procedures” Related to Obstetrics and Gynecology

Position Statement

Rationale:

Distinguishing interventions considered as “procedures” from those considered as “surgery” is important on multiple levels. In an era of team-based care, it is important to designate those interventions which can be safely performed by an appropriately trained and credentialed non-physician provider. These interventions are generally associated with lower risk of complications, including infection, bleeding, scarring, and pain. The classification of an intervention as a “procedure” should be based on the intervention being performed, and not based on the location at which the procedure is performed or the level of anesthesia or sedation being utilized.

Definition:

A procedure is a short interventional technique that includes the following general categories:

- non-incisional diagnostic or therapeutic intervention through a natural body cavity or orifice
- superficial incisional or excisional diagnostic or therapeutic intervention that does not involve repair or significantly alter morphology
- device placement into a natural cavity
- subcutaneous implant
- injections.

All other invasive interventions (including superficial incisional or excisional procedures and placement of devices or implants that require repair) are considered “surgery.”

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