

WHY CHILDBIRTH IS PROBLEMATIC IN HUMANS

In humans, during birth, the large head of the fetus must pass and rotate through a relatively small, rigid, and twisted birth canal, making childbirth a lengthy and risky process. This is not the case for other mammals, some of which have neonates that are proportionally larger than human babies relative to the size of the maternal birth canal. The unique situation in humans arose, during evolution, as a trade-off between the need for an efficient delivery, and the strong constraints imposed by an upright posture. An upright posture requires a rigid pelvis to support the fetus and to enable efficient bipedalism.

These concepts are well explored in an article which appeared in *Am J Obstet Gynecol* (1).

As Dobzhansky famously stated: Nothing in biology makes sense except in the light of evolution!

1. [https://www.ajog.org/article/S0002-9378\(22\)00733-5/fulltext](https://www.ajog.org/article/S0002-9378(22)00733-5/fulltext)