

Figure 16. Contraindications for the Use of Forceps

- ◆ Non-consenting or uncooperative patient
- ◆ Patient and/or fetus with established hemorrhagic diathesis or at significant risk for it (including thrombocytopenias)
- ◆ Osteogenesis imperfecta
- ◆ Unengaged head
- ◆ Unknown position of the fetal head ^(&)
- ◆ Mid-transverse arrest with posterior asynclitism
- ◆ Dead fetus or known lethal anomaly in the fetus ^(*)

(&) Position of the head needs to be established if possible through the clinical palpation of both fontanelles. Though recently the use of ultrasound to diagnose position in cases of difficult ascertainment has been recommended, the presence of a large caput or bone overlap with obliteration of fontanelles is a clinical marker for difficulty of the procedure.

(*) In general there is no reason to expose the mother to potential injuries, if the fetus is non-viable.

NOTE: Macrosomia is not a contraindication for operative vaginal delivery; caution should be used because the increased risk of shoulder dystocia in this situation.

References: 5, 11.