Immediate delivery

Umbilical cord sampling for foetal pH, markers of tissue damage, indices of oxidative stress, lactate and allopurinol levels

Eligibility criteria (N=220)

Gestational age ≥ 36 weeks

Suspected foetal distress by either:
1. Abnormal or non-reassuring foetal heart rate trace
2. Significant ST-wave abnormalities (as detected by the STAN monitor)
3. Abnormal foetal blood scalp sampling (pH < 7.20)

Absence of congenital, chromosomal or syndromal anomalies

Allopurinol 500 mg IV (n=110) (dissolved in water for injection) to the mother in 10 minutes

Placebo IV (n=110) (dissolved in water for injection) to the mother in 10 minutes

Short term neonatal follow-up

Blood sampling for oxidative stress, markers of tissue damage, allopurinol plasma levels, glucose and lactate, < 1 h after birth and 18-24 h after birth in all children with clinically indicated blood sampling.