

The aim of the thesis is to present the concern with the issue of birth trauma. Theoretical part deals with birth as a psycho-physiological process and a socio-cultural phenomenon. Practical part constitutes of interviews with women who experienced traumatising birth. The interview material is analysed by use of qualitative methodology and is presented as birth stories. Birth is a very sensitive time in both child's and mother's lives and plays a crucial role in forming their relationship. It can be the most beautiful experience in woman's life and, from the psychological point of view, a big source of energy, self-confidence and pride which positively influence the mother-child relationship. On the other hand, childbirth experience can turn into an extreme psychological distress resulting in feelings of guilt and one's inferiority and have long-term negative effects on the integrity of the mother-child relationship. The thesis presents a complex variety of circumstances and reasons which may result in birth trauma. It focuses on the influence of obstetric care and communication between medical staff and the birthing woman that often lead to birth trauma and place a great strain on the mother-child relationship. The present work also discusses ways of dealing with the problem.