

MIDWIFERY

Antenatal, Natal, and Postnatal Care of a Mother

In-depth Study Notes for Loksewa- ANM & SN

Chapter 5.2: Antenatal, Natal, and Postnatal Care of a Mother

INTRODUCTION

Midwifery care spans the entire spectrum of a woman's pregnancy—from conception through childbirth and into the postpartum period. The aim is to ensure a healthy outcome for both the mother and the baby. The three key phases of maternal care are:

1. Antenatal Care (ANC)
2. Natal Care (Intrapartum Care)
3. Postnatal Care (PNC)

A. ANTENATAL CARE (ANC)

1. Objectives

- To promote and maintain the health of pregnant women.
- To detect early and manage complications and risk factors.
- To prepare women physically and psychologically for childbirth.
- To ensure the delivery of a healthy baby.
- To promote safe motherhood and birth preparedness.

2. Components of ANC

1. Early Registration

- Preferably within the first trimester (before 12 weeks)
- Enables early detection of complications and timely interventions

2. Scheduled Visits

- WHO recommends a minimum of 8 ANC contacts to reduce perinatal mortality.
- At least 4 ANC visits if 8 is not feasible:
 - 1st Visit: Up to 12 weeks
 - 2nd Visit: 26 weeks

- 3rd Visit: 32 weeks
- 4th Visit: 36 weeks

3. History Taking

- Medical, surgical, obstetric, menstrual, and family history

4. Physical Examinations

- Weight, height, blood pressure
- Abdominal examination for fetal growth and presentation
- Pelvic assessment if required

5. Laboratory Investigations

- Hemoglobin level (detect anemia)
- Urine test (protein and sugar)
- Blood group and Rh typing
- Syphilis test (VDRL/RPR)
- Hepatitis B, HIV, blood sugar screening
- Ultrasound for fetal growth, anomalies, placental position

6. Immunization

- Two doses of Td (Tetanus and Diphtheria) at least 4 weeks apart

7. Iron and Folic Acid Supplementation

- 60 mg iron + 400 mcg folic acid daily for 180 days during pregnancy
- Continue for 6 months postpartum

8. Deworming

- Albendazole after first trimester to prevent anemia due to worms

9. Calcium Supplementation

- 500 mg calcium tablet twice daily from 14 weeks till delivery

10. Health Education and Counseling

- Diet, hygiene, exercise
- Birth preparedness and danger signs
- Breastfeeding, family planning

3. Danger Signs During Pregnancy

- Vaginal bleeding
- Severe headache
- Blurred vision
- Convulsions
- High fever
- Painful urination
- Reduced or absent fetal movement
- Swelling of face and hands
- Leakage of amniotic fluid

B. NATAL CARE (Intrapartum Care)

1. Objectives

- Ensure a safe and clean delivery
- Monitor and manage labor progression
- Prevent complications such as obstructed labor or postpartum hemorrhage

2. Care During Labor

First Stage: Onset of regular contractions to full cervical dilation (10 cm)

- Monitoring: Vital signs, contractions, fetal heart rate
- Use of **partograph** to monitor progress
- Encourage ambulation and oral fluids

Second Stage: Full dilation to delivery of the baby

- Support bearing down efforts
- Episiotomy if needed
- Immediate newborn care upon delivery

Third Stage: Delivery of the placenta

- **Active Management of the Third Stage of Labor (AMTSL):**
 - Administer oxytocin 10 IU IM after birth
 - Controlled cord traction
 - Uterine massage

Fourth Stage: First hour after placental delivery

- Monitor for postpartum hemorrhage
- Check vital signs every 15 minutes

3. Immediate Newborn Care

- Dry the baby thoroughly
- Keep warm (skin-to-skin contact)
- Initiate breastfeeding within 1 hour
- Assess APGAR score at 1 and 5 minutes
- Ensure clean cord care

C. POSTNATAL CARE (PNC)

1. Objectives

- Promote maternal and infant health
- Detect and manage postpartum complications
- Provide family planning, nutrition, and breastfeeding support

2. Schedule of Visits

- Within 24 hours of delivery
- At 3 days, 7 days, 14 days, and 6 weeks post-delivery

3. Mother's Assessment

- Uterine involution (should return to normal size in 6 weeks)
- Vaginal discharge (lochia pattern)
- Vital signs and perineal healing
- Breast exam for engorgement or mastitis
- Emotional well-being (screening for postpartum depression)

4. Baby's Assessment

- Weight gain, jaundice, cord healing
- Breastfeeding adequacy
- Immunizations (BCG, OPV, Hep B at birth)
- Danger signs: difficulty breathing, fever, poor feeding

5. Postpartum Advice

- Balanced diet rich in iron and calcium
- Maintain hygiene (perineal, breast care)
- Rest and avoid heavy labor
- Contraceptive counseling: Lactational Amenorrhea Method (LAM), IUCD, pills, etc.

Tables for Clarity

Table 1: Recommended ANC Visit Schedule

Visit No.	Time	Purpose
1st	≤ 12 weeks	Early detection of complications, baseline tests
2nd	26 weeks	Monitor fetal growth, health promotion
3rd	32 weeks	Prepare for delivery, assess fetal position
4th	36 weeks	Delivery plan, danger sign awareness

Table 2: Danger Signs in Pregnancy

Sign	Possible Cause
Vaginal bleeding	Placenta previa, abruption
Convulsions	Eclampsia
Fever	Infection (UTI, sepsis)
Severe headache	Pre-eclampsia

Table 3: Postnatal Visit Checklist

Area	Key Points
Mother	Vitals, bleeding, pain, uterus, lochia
Newborn	Weight, feeding, cord, immunization
Counseling	Nutrition, FP, danger signs, hygiene

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

1. When should the first antenatal check-up ideally be done?
 - a) After 20 weeks
 - b) Between 24–28 weeks
 - c) Before 12 weeks
 - d) After 36 weeks

Answer: c) Before 12 weeks
2. Which of the following is a component of AMTSL?
 - a) Use of magnesium sulfate
 - b) Controlled cord traction
 - c) Antibiotic prophylaxis

d) Foley catheter insertion

Answer: b) Controlled cord traction

3. How many postnatal visits are recommended? a) 1

b) 2

c) 3

d) At least 4

Answer: d) At least 4

4. What is the purpose of a partograph? a) Monitor baby's growth

b) Evaluate breast condition

c) Monitor labor progress

d) Check fetal abnormalities

Answer: c) Monitor labor progress

5. Which of the following is NOT a danger sign in pregnancy? a) Swelling of feet b) Vaginal bleeding c)

Severe abdominal pain d) Blurred vision **Answer:** a) Swelling of feet