SAFE MOTHERHOOD – Importance of Antenatal Care

A Positive PREGNANCY EXPERIENCE

Defined as ‘maintaining physical and sociocultural normality, maintaining a healthy pregnancy for mother and baby (including preventing or treating risks, illness and death), having an effective transition to positive labour and birth, and achieving positive motherhood (including maternal self-esteem, competence and autonomy).

Motherhood is often a positive and fulfilling experience, but for too many women it is associated with suffering, ill-health and even death.
ANTENATAL CARE (ANC)

Antenatal Care (ANC) can be defined as the care provided by skilled health-care professionals to pregnant women and adolescent girls in order to ensure the best health conditions for both mother and baby during pregnancy.

THE COMPONENTS OF ANC INCLUDE:

1 - Risk identification
2 - Prevention and management of pregnancy-related or concurrent diseases
3 - Health education and health promotion

ANC reduces maternal and perinatal morbidity and mortality both directly through detection and treatment of pregnancy-related complications, and indirectly, through the identification of women and girls at increased risk of developing complications during labour and delivery, thus, ensuring referral to an appropriate level of care.
Many of these adverse outcomes can be prevented by quality healthcare during pregnancy and childbirth. Within the continuum of care, antenatal care (ANC) provides a platform for critical healthcare functions including health promotion, prevention, screening and diagnosis of diseases. Implementing timely and appropriate evidence-based practices during ANC can improve maternal and fetal health.
In 2015, an estimated 303,000 women died from pregnancy-related causes and 2.6 million babies were stillborn, half occurring during the third trimester.

On 7 November 2016, the World Health Organization (WHO) released its comprehensive recommendations on routine ANC for pregnant women and adolescent girls.
W.H.O RECOMMENDATIONS on Antenatal Care

WHO’s new antenatal care model increases the number of contacts a pregnant woman has with health providers throughout her pregnancy from four to eight.

Recent evidence indicates that a higher frequency of antenatal contacts by women and adolescent girls with the health system is associated with a reduced likelihood of stillbirths. This is because of the increased opportunities to detect and manage potential problems.

A minimum of eight contacts for antenatal care can reduce perinatal deaths by up to 8 per 1000 births when compared to a minimum of four visits.

The new model increases maternal and fetal assessments to detect problems, improves communication between health providers and pregnant women, and increases the likelihood of positive pregnancy outcomes.

It recommends pregnant women to have their first contact in the first 12 weeks’ gestation, with subsequent contacts taking place at 20, 26, 30, 34, 36, 38 and 40 weeks’ gestation.

The new guidelines contain 49 recommendations that outline what care pregnant women should receive at each of the contacts with the health system, including counselling on healthy diet and optimal nutrition, physical activity, tobacco and substance use, malaria and HIV prevention, blood tests and tetanus vaccination, fetal measurements including use of ultrasound and advice for dealing with common physiological symptoms such as nausea, back pain and constipation.
Some important **RECOMMENDATIONS INCLUDE:**

- Antenatal care model with a minimum of eight contacts recommended to reduce perinatal mortality and improve women’s experience of care.
- Counselling about healthy eating and keeping physically active during pregnancy.
- Daily oral iron and folic acid supplementation with **30 mg to 60 mg** of elemental iron and **400 µg (0.4 mg)** folic acid for pregnant women to prevent maternal anaemia, puerperal sepsis, low birth weight, and preterm birth.
- Tetanus toxoid vaccination is recommended for all pregnant women, depending on previous tetanus vaccination exposure, to prevent neonatal mortality from tetanus.

- One ultrasound scan before **24 weeks’ gestation** (early ultrasound) is recommended for pregnant women to estimate gestational age, improve detection of fetal anomalies and multiple pregnancies, reduce induction of labour for post-term pregnancy, and improve a woman’s pregnancy experience.
- Health-care providers should ask all pregnant women about their use of alcohol and other substances (past and present) as early as possible in the pregnancy and at every antenatal visit.
Role of a **NURSE OR MIDWIFE** in Promoting Antenatal Care

Nurse or midwife provides expert special care during pregnancy, delivery and after birth so that their role is unique. Various roles and responsibilities of a nurse have listed below:

**Nurse as a coordinator** to ensure holistic, voluntary and social services for all pregnant women.

**Nurse plans, provides and reviews a woman’s care, throughout her journey of motherhood.**

**As an educator, nurses provide high quality, culturally sensitive health education in order to promote healthy and safe motherhood.**

**Midwives provide information and counsel pregnant women on prenatal self care including nutrition, hygiene, breastfeeding and danger sings in pregnancy and childbirth.**

**Care Giver:**
Nurse provides high quality antenatal and postnatal care to maximize the women’s health during and after pregnancy.

**Leader:**

**Educator:**

**Communicator:**
Effective communication helps to develop trust relationship with pregnant women and family members.

**Counselor:**

**Adviser:**
Midwives give advice on development of birth plan and promote the concept of birth preparedness. They also give advice during complicated

**Supervisor:**
Supervising and assisting mothers during antenatal period, monitoring the condition of the condition of the fetus and using their knowledge to identify early signs of complication.
Don’t Forget

To Check UHS Medical Times For July

July Edition of UHS Medical Times brings light on Disease Hepatitis. It explains various factors and causes bringing Hepatitis.

All types, symptoms, complications, tips etc of hepatitis are mentioned in this edition. This will allow you to take required precautions.

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WHAT IS HEPATITIS?

Hepatitis refers to an inflammatory condition of the liver. It’s commonly caused by a viral infection, but there are other possible causes of hepatitis. These include autoimmune hepatitis and hepatitis that occurs as a secondary result of medications, drug, toxin, and alcohol. Autoimmune hepatitis is a disease that occurs when your body makes antibodies against your liver tissue. Your liver is located in the right upper area of your abdomen. It performs many vital functions that affect vitamins throughout your body, including:

✓ Bile Production, which is Essential to Digestion
✓ Filtering of Toxins from Your Body
✓ Excretion of Bilirubin (A Product of Broken-Down red blood Cells), Cholesterol, Hormones, and Drugs
✓ Synthesis of Blood Proteins, such as Albumin
✓ Synthesis of Clotting Factors

HEPATITIS COULD YOU HAVE IT?

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