PERINATAL AND POSTNATAL CARE
What are the 3 Stages of Labor?

1. Contractions open the cervix
2. The baby is born
3. The placenta is expelled
THE BEGINNING OF LABOR

- **Lightening**
  - Baby settles deep in the pelvis
  - Pressure on the upper abdomen is reduced
  - Mother gets anxious
  - Happens during the last few weeks of pregnancy for the first pregnancy.
  - Women who have already had a baby, may happen right before labor begins.
EARLY SIGNS OF LABOR

- **The “Show” or “Bloody Show”**
  - Few drops of blood or pinkish vaginal stain that occurs when the mucus that plugs the uterus during pregnancy dissolves.
  - May occur as early as a few days prior to birth.

- **Water Breaks**
  - Trickle or gush of warm fluid from the vagina
  - This indicates that the amniotic sac has broken
  - Delivery should be within 24 to 48 hours
EARLY SIGNS OF LABOR

- **Contractions**
  - Tightening and releasing of the muscles of the uterus
  - Purpose: to push the baby against the cervix

- **Fetal Monitoring**
  - Watching the unborn baby’s heart rate for indications of stress
  - Usually done during labor and birth.
  - Most common method is an ultrasound.
Stage 1: ContractionS Open Cervix

- **What Takes Place?**
  - Contractions come at regular intervals.

- **How Long Does It Last?**
  - First Child: 6 to 18 hours
  - Later Children: 2 to 5 hours
Stage 2: The Baby is Born

- **What Takes Place?**
  - Contractions are stronger, pushing the baby through the birth canal.

- **How Long Does It Last?**
  - **First Child:** 1 to 2 hours
  - **Later Children:** 15 to 30 minutes
**Stage 3: The Placenta is Expelled**

- **What Takes Place?**
  - The placenta comes out.

- **How Long Does It Last?**
  - 10 to 30 minutes
BREECH PRESENTATION OR POSITION

- Feet or butt first rather than the head
- Babies may have a difficult time moving through the pelvis area.
- Doctors will decide whether a normal delivery is possible.
- Usually a cesarean birth is necessary.
Cesarean Birth

- Cesarean section or C-Section
- Delivery of a baby through a surgical incision in the mother’s abdomen.

Why:
- Lack of normal progress during labor
- Discover the baby is distressed or turned the wrong way
- Multiple births

- Epidural or anesthesia is used
- May need up to 6 weeks for full recovery
NEWBORNS APPEARANCE

- **Fontanel**: soft spots or open space on the skull; bones are not yet joined.
  - EX: Just above the forehead; back of the skull
  - Appearance: pointed or lopsided due to the passage through the birth canal.

- **Eye Color** changes – permanent at 3-6 months

- **Very Large Head**: due to the size of the brain.

- **Milia**: tiny, white bumps on baby’s nose and cheeks.

- **Lanugo**
**Physical Adjustments**

- **Circulatory System** - Changing temperature.
  - Baby should be wrapped in a blanket and a knit cap on their head.

- **Lanugo** - fine, downy hair growing on newborns’ foreheads, backs, and shoulders.
  - Disappears soon after birth
**Baby’s first Bath**

- **Vernix**—thick, white, pasty substance made up of the fetus’s old skin cells and the secretions of skin glands.
  - Protects baby from amniotic fluid
First Exam

- **Apgar Scale** - system rating the physical condition of the newborn
  - **Five Factors:**
    1. Heart Rate
    2. Breathing
    3. Muscle Tone
    4. Response to Stimulation (crying)
    5. Skin Color
  - Rating for each factor 0 to 2
  - Normal Score 6 to 10
OTHER MEDICAL PROCEDURES

- Hearing Test
- Blood Test
  - Screen for diseases or disorders
- Hepatitis B Vaccine
OTHER HOSPITAL CARE

- Weigh, measure, and dry baby
- Apply antibiotic to baby’s eye
- Inject Vitamin K to prevent rare bleeding disorder
**Newborns Reflexes**

- Instinctive automatic responses
- Involuntary → voluntary
- Sneezing & swallowing continue throughout life
- Reflexes that last until voluntary control is developed:
  - Rooting
  - Grasp
  - Startle
Caring for Newborns

- **Feeding**
  - Every 2-3 hours

- **Sleeping**
  - Average of 15 hours per day

- **Exercise**
  - Actively moving arms and legs to gain strength and control

- **Safe, clean, and warm**
  - Diaper and bathe
  - Close watch
NEONATAL PERIOD

- First month after the baby is born
- Major adjustments for mother and baby.
- **Bonding**- forming emotional ties between parents and child.

**Ways to Bond:**
- Touching the check
- Holding the baby close
- Talking to the baby
- Singing
- Breast feeding / Bottle feeding
**Brain Development**

- Bonding helps with brain development.
- During the first year, a baby’s brain cells are making millions of connections.
  - Parents' efforts to bond with the baby helps **build connections in the brain**.
  - **Interactions**, such as holding or singing, help strengthen the baby’s brain development.
**Breast Feeding**

- Colostrum -
  - A high calorie, high protein early breast milk.
  - Provides protection from illnesses; builds immunity.
  - Satisfies the baby’s appetite
**Jaundice**

- Condition that causes the baby’s skin and eyes to look slightly yellow.
- Occurs in more than 50% of newborns
- **Why:** the liver cannot remove bilirubin
  - **Bilirubin** - a substance produced by the breakdown of red blood cells.
  - Baby’s body is producing too much or not able to get rid of it fast enough
- If Jaundice is left untreated, it can damage the nervous system
- **Treatment** - newborn is placed under an ultraviolet light that is absorbed by the baby’s skin.
POST NATAL CARE OF THE MOTHER

- New mothers have specific physical and emotional needs
  - Doctor or nurse discuss these needs before mother and baby go home
  - A general expectation is that by 6 weeks after birth a woman's body will have recovered sufficiently from the effects of pregnancy and the process of parturition
POSTNATAL CARE

- The time following the baby’s birth
- **Physical Needs:**
  - Rest
  - Exercise - stretching and walking
  - Good Nutrition-
  - Medical Checkups - 4 to 6 weeks after birth
- **Emotions:**
  - Confused
  - Mood Swings
  - Baby blues - crying, irritated, lonely, anxious, or sad
  - Postpartum depression - very sad, cry a lot, have little energy, feel overly anxious or little interest in baby.
Recovery After Childbirth

- Physical Needs
  - Recover from pregnancy and birth
  - Regain fitness
    - About 12 pounds is lost during birth (baby, placenta, fluids)
    - 4 pounds by the end of 1st week (water weight)
    - Takes a few months
  - Must take of herself in order to properly take care of baby
**Recovery After Childbirth**

- **Uterus**
  - Shrinks back to its previous size and location
  - May feel it contracting
  - As uterus shrinks, abdomen tightens

- **Fluid**
  - Additional fluid stored during pregnancy
  - New mothers perspire more and urinate more to rid the excess fluid
Recovery After Childbirth

- Physical Needs
  - Rest
  - Exercise to decrease body weight
  - Nutrition
  - Medical Checkup
    - 4-6 weeks after birth
    - Postnatal checkup
    - Check uterus and any problems (PPH)
Recovery After Childbirth

- Postnatal Care (after childbirth)
  - Rest and sleep
  - Nutrition
  - Postnatal checkup
  - Exercise (pelvic floor)