

Module 3: Woman-centred midwifery care during the postnatal /newborn periods including examination of the newborn

Introduction



Learning outcomes

On completion of this module and your midwifery practice subject, you should be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the anatomical, physiological, emotional, social and relationship changes that occur during the postpartum and fetal to newborn transition periods;
- Apply knowledge, evidence, skills and attitudes to enable woman-centred postnatal care;
- Apply theoretical understanding to woman-led midwifery assessment and practice during the normal postnatal/newborn period;
- Utilise your knowledge of the normal to recognise any deviations from the normal during the postnatal/newborn periods;
- Evaluate current postnatal practices, both your own, and those provided by the health care system;
- Advocate for the primacy of choice and control for the woman
- Apply the principles of primary health care to woman-led, postnatal midwifery care.



Video

Watch this topic introduction video.



Discussion Board

Use the Topic Discussion Board to discuss your thoughts and questions relating to this topic. You may also like to share current issues found in the media or an experience you have had in your midwifery practice. If sharing experiences from the clinical world, please be mindful of confidentiality.

Topic 1: Care of the healthy newborn infant



Read

Textbook: Gunn, Davies & Baddock (2015). Supporting the newborn infant. In *Midwifery: Preparation for practice* (3rd ed., ch. 32, pp. 764-801).

Textbook: Michaelides. (2011). Part 7: The newborn baby: Physiology, assessment and care. In *Mayes Midwifery* (14th ed., chap. 41, pp. 567-597).

Textbook: Michaelides. (2011). Part 7: The newborn baby: Thermoregulation: Well newborn component. In *Mayes Midwifery* (14th ed., chap. 42, pp. 601-609).



As a midwife, this knowledge is essential. You will notice that certain conditions need to be present to enable the physiological adaptations of the newborn to occur. Your role is to ensure that the newborn has these conditions present so that the adaptation to extrauterine life can be made without problem. After completing the reading of the physical adaptations you would have already gained a good understanding of the newborn's needs. The behaviour of the normal newborn is fascinating and it is surprising just how much they can do.

Activity



What factors are responsible for initiation of respiration in the newborn?

What are the four major mechanisms of heat loss/heat transfer in the neonate?

What is physiological jaundice, and how is it distinguished from pathologic jaundice in the newborn?

What is the significance of the gestational age assessment for the neonate?



Activity

Given the situation in the postnatal ward where you work, list strategies that will reduce newborn stress and improve the mother-infant relationship?

Vitamin K injections are part of routine newborn care that requires informed consent from the mother.

Does vitamin K prophylaxis used in your unit contain animal products (is there a glycocholic acid component that is extracted from the gall bladders of cattle)?

How does an active third stage of labour increase the risk of vitamin K deficiency in the newborn?

The assessment of the well newborn is a core midwifery skill. Using the newborn assessment worksheets in your MID443/444 portfolio workbook (if you are a pre-registration midwifery student), outline the steps you take and the way you document your findings during the well newborn assessment. Please note, stating 'NAD' for any component of the well newborn assessment is unacceptable midwifery practice.

Topic 2: Care of the woman during the normal postnatal period

Postnatal care is an important aspect of midwifery care.

Read



Textbook: Dixon & Schmied (2015). Supporting women becoming mothers. In *Midwifery: Preparation for practice* (3rd ed., chap. 30, pp. 728-750).

Textbook: Dahlen, H. (2015). Perineal care and repair. In *Midwifery: Preparation for practice* (3rd ed., chap. 28, pp. 693-715).

Textbook: Jackson. (2011). Organization of postnatal care. In *Mayes midwifery* (14th ed., chap. 51, pp. 725-732).

Activity 1

What does a 'postnatal check' consist of?

What does the term 'involution' refer to?

What then does 'sub-involution' mean?

What are some midwifery actions that would promote healing of the perineum?



What do you see as some of the advantages of early postnatal discharge?

Infant feeding is initiated during the postnatal period, hopefully immediately after birth. Breastfeeding is discussed in Module 4.

Activity 2

Consider the postnatal experience of mothers in the unit where you work.

What strategies could you use to make the postnatal experience for women in your unit a more positive experience?