

Introduction to Maternity Care

Encompasses preventive, curative and rehabilitative care through the life span. The WHO has reported that maternity and childcare is very important for eastern Mediterranean and gulf region for the following factors:

1. Fertility rates in the region are high and still rising.
2. Morbidity and mortality rates for women and children remain high
3. Many women live in poverty and suffer from poor living conditions, pollution and illiteracy.

☆ Community-Centered Care:

There has been a trend to move maternity care away from major medical centers and to community-based facilities, such Primary Health Care Centers.

☞ *Objectives of Primary health care:*

1. Promotive:

- i. Activities given to promote health as health education and school programs
- ii. If primary health care is delivered properly, then 80% of health needs will be met, and 20% of health problems can be referred to secondary and tertiary levels

2. Preventive:

Services given to prevent diseases as immunization

3. Curative:

Services are given to treat the disease

4. Rehabilitative:

It aims at helping the individual to live with his maximum capabilities in spite of presence disability as artificial prosthesis

☞ *Elements:*

- a. Health education regarding common health problems and the methods of preventing and controlling them
- b. Promotion of food supply and proper nutrition
- c. Provision of comprehensive maternal and child health care
- d. Immunization of children against major communicable diseases
- e. Prevention and control of locally endemic diseases
- f. Provision of adequate supply of water and basic sanitation
- g. Appropriate treatment of common diseases and injuries
- h. Provision of essential drugs

Maternal & Child Health Care

*** Objectives of Maternal & Child Health:**

1. To promote, maintain and protect health of mothers and children within the community.
2. To reduce maternal and child morbidity and mortality
3. Early detection of high risk mothers and children, and provide special care in the community

☞ Such objectives can be achieved through:

- a. Providing comprehensive health care to pregnant mothers*
- b. Recording and reporting of chronic illness, high risk pregnancy, and health problems of children*
- c. Promoting community education in relation to antenatal care*
- d. Following up of pregnancy through home visits*

*** Maternal & Child Health Care:**

Maternal health care is one part of the primary health care system, focusing on promoting and protecting the health of women during childbearing age. Maternal care includes; Pre-Marital Care, Antenatal Care, Natal, Postnatal, and Family Health

*** Pre-Marital Care:**

A. Importance of Pre-Marital Care:

1. Early detection of health problems, and hence better chance of treatment.

2. Providing guidance, preparation for marriage, family education, training in the art of child bearing and family planning.
3. Prevention of health problems for the couple and their future children.

B. Components of Pre-Marital Care:

1. Premarital examination, including history taking, physical examination, and laboratory examinations
2. Premarital education
3. Premarital counseling

*** Antenatal Care:**

A. The main objectives of antenatal care:

1. Promote, protect and maintain the health of the pregnant mothers.
2. Decrease psychological disturbances during pregnancy (fear & anxiety).
3. Decrease infant and maternal morbidity and mortality rate.
4. Early detection of complications.
5. Identification of high risk pregnancy and provide them with special care
6. Promote and improve nutritional status of mother and child
7. Improve standard of personal hygiene
8. Ensure better utilization of MCH services

B. Schedule of antenatal visits:

1. Once a month visit during the first and second trimesters.

2. Twice per month during the seventh and the eighth months of pregnancy.
3. Once per week in the ninth month until the time of delivery.

☞ Routine Antenatal Care:

I. The First Visit Include:

- a. History of previous pregnancy
- b. Complete physical examination
- c. Obstetric examination
- d. Laboratory investigation
- e. Detect signs & symptoms of high risk pregnancy
- f. Documentation of the data
- g. Health education regarding rest, sleep, nutrition, drugs, follow up, hygiene, exercise, warning signs, and morning sickness

II. Subsequent visits in the second and third trimester:

- a. The routine antenatal care in addition to ultrasound
- b. More attention in the presence of high blood pressure, edema or weight gain
- c. Health education should be continued
- d. Place of birth (home, hospital or health care center)

☼ Types of Delivery:

I. Home Delivery:

☞ Advantage:

1. The mother delivers in a family surrounding; hence fear of hospital is decreased.
2. The chance of cross infection could be minimal

3. The social satisfaction of the mother and her family

☞ Disadvantage:

1. The mother would have less medical and nursing supervision than in the hospital.
2. The mother would have less rest, may resume her domestic duty.
3. Her diet may be neglected.

II. Hospital Delivery:

Is usually recommended for high risk pregnancy

✱ **Post Natal Care:**

☞ *Objectives of Post Natal Care:*

1. Prevent complication of post partum period
2. Restore health of the mother and child
3. Provide health education on nutrition