

International Journal of Clinical Obstetrics and Gynaecology

ISSN (P): 2522-6614
ISSN (E): 2522-6622
© Gynaecology Journal
www.gynaecologyjournal.com
2021; 5(2): 150-152
Received: 16-01-2021
Accepted: 20-02-2021

Dr. Ufaque Muzaffar

Lecturer, Department of Obstetrics
and Gynaecology, Government
Medical College, Srinagar, Jammu
and Kashmir, India

Role of family in general management and care during and after pregnancy

Dr. Ufaque Muzaffar

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33545/gynae.2021.v5.i2c.880>

Abstract

Introduction: Supporting someone through pregnancy, labour and newborn baby care is an important job. Whether you are the baby's father, the pregnant woman's partner or are supporting a single mother-to-be, you have a crucial role in ensuring she gets the support she needs during this life-changing time. Pregnancy can be an emotional rollercoaster, and for some women, it can feel like the longest nine months of their lives.

Discussion: During prenatal and postnatal pregnancy, family plays a prominent role. Family support is a must to a pregnant lady because that healthy impact on a pregnant lady conceives a healthy baby. Family bonding should be both mentally and physically. Prenatal and postnatal pregnant woman goes under severe stress without her knowledge. The family has to take care of her, by eradicating all the stress. Here family means both maternal and paternal bonding, firstly comes husband's understanding.

Conclusion: Counseling and communication effectively with women on self-care in the home during pregnancy with cultural and religious beliefs in the community affects the care a pregnant woman receives in the home and the support she receives from her partner and family. This helps us to assess how to involve partners and other key family members in counselling.

Keywords: Prenatal, postnatal, pregnancy, counselling

Introduction

Supporting someone through pregnancy, labour and newborn baby care is an important job. Whether you are the baby's father, the pregnant woman's partner or are supporting a single mother-to-be, you have a crucial role in ensuring she gets the support she needs during this life-changing time. Pregnancy can be an emotional rollercoaster, and for some women, it can feel like the longest nine months of their lives. Caring for a newborn baby can be exhausting and take its toll on relationships. Helping to meet the new mum's physical and mental health needs is important for the health of the woman, the newborn baby and your relationship. Every woman's experience of pregnancy is different. Some feel well the whole way through; other women experience morning sickness right up until the time they give birth. Some women even need to be hospitalised if a condition such as pre-eclampsia (high blood pressure) becomes severe.

Discussion: Morning sickness

Morning sickness¹ is the most common health complaint for pregnant women. It usually begins around the fourth week of pregnancy and settles by the 12th to 14th week. Some women continue to have morning sickness symptoms into their second trimester, and a small percentage experience nausea and vomiting for the entire duration of their pregnancy.

Despite its name, morning sickness is not always restricted to the morning. It can strike at any point during the day or night and symptoms of morning sickness include nausea and vomiting. You can support your partner by:

- preparing meals – cooking smells can make nausea worse
- encouraging her to snack on a few dry crackers or plain sweet biscuits before she gets out of bed or throughout the day as hunger can intensify morning sickness symptoms
- encouraging her to drink as much as possible (water, diluted fruit juice, weak tea, ginger tea, clear soup, beef extract drinks or sucking on ice cubes can help)
- taking on more household chores so she can rest.

Corresponding Author:

Dr. Ufaque Muzaffar

Lecturer, Department of Obstetrics
and Gynaecology, Government
Medical College, Srinagar, Jammu
and Kashmir, India

Emotional health

Be mindful of how fluctuating hormones can bring on mood swings. Your partner might get teary from time to time or might become frustrated with being pregnant, especially if she feels unwell.

Tiredness can also cause irritability. As your partner gets further along in her pregnancy sleeping is likely to become more and more uncomfortable. The baby's weight can put pressure on her spine, back muscles, intestines, bladder and major blood vessels, leading to decreased circulation, pain and a frequent need to urinate. This can make it difficult to sleep. Getting your partner a full body pillow, giving her backrubs and brewing soothing teas can all help.

After the birth, the 'baby blues' can set in due to significant hormonal changes. In most cases this passes within a few days, but if it develops into postnatal depression, it is important that your partner talks about it – if not with you, with a professional. She can start by speaking with her general practitioner (GP) or her maternal and child health nurse.

Preparing for childbirth

Reading books on pregnancy and newborns, and attending antenatal classes with your partner are good ways to help you prepare for the baby's arrival. Go to pregnancy appointments if you can, especially the more important ones such as scans, so you can understand first-hand how the pregnancy is progressing. Think ahead about practical issues such as whether you want to cut the umbilical cord, or if you want to take photos.

When your partner is in labour, help her settle in at the hospital, labour ward, birthing centre or wherever she is having the baby. Make sure she is comfortable and ask about her needs – this might be a hand to hold (or squeeze!), a sip of water or just words of encouragement.

Adjusting to parenthood

After the baby comes, life in your household will change. It is important to look after your baby, yourself and your relationship during this often emotional time.

Get involved with your newborn baby and their care. Help with settling, bathing, changing and playing. Persist with these things even if the baby seems to prefer their mum. Resist the urge to hand the baby back every time the baby gets demanding. Only by doing will you build your confidence and skills.

Spending one-on-one time with your newborn baby will help establish a bond and will also give your partner a rest.

Make time for play – talking with your baby, singing, making funny noises or pulling silly faces. All these things help to build the baby's communication skills from an early age.

There might be things your partner cannot do while she recovers from childbirth, especially if she has had a caesarean. Be mindful of her limitations and help out where you can.

Helping with breastfeeding

Although you cannot provide the milk, there are things you can do to make breastfeeding easier for your partner. This will also allow you to play a more active role in the baby's care.

Breastfeeding can be difficult for some new mums, so be supportive if your partner is having trouble. She may feel anxious or even in pain while she is feeding. Each feed may take a long time, which may make her feel frustrated. Help out by seeing what needs doing around the house. Knowing she can take her time might help your partner to relax and will make the experience easier. There might be an opportunity for you to feed your baby a bottle of expressed milk. This can be a good way to

bond with your baby and to give your partner a rest. This will not suit everyone, however. Some women find expressing milk uncomfortable and even painful. If your partner decides to express, it is a good idea to wait a few weeks so the baby can get used to feeding from the breast before you introduce a bottle. If you are feeding your baby using infant formula, you will be able to help at any feed.

Bonding with your baby

Many parents bond with their newborns the minute they lay eyes on them, but for other new parents (mothers included) the bonding process can take a bit longer. Do not let this worry you. It will happen in time. Sometimes you might feel your role as a parent has been diminished to ticking tasks off a list – change the baby, sterilise the bottles, take the baby for a walk.

Sometimes mothers adapt to their new role by shutting other people out. This might make you feel redundant.

Role of family during prenatal and postnatal [2]:

- During prenatal and postnatal pregnancy, family plays a prominent role.
- Family support is a must to a pregnant lady because that healthy impact on a pregnant lady conceives a healthy baby.
- Family bonding should be both mentally and physically.
- Prenatal and postnatal pregnant woman goes under severe stress without her knowledge.
- The family has to take care of her, by eradicating all the stress.
- Here family means both maternal and paternal bonding, firstly comes husband's understanding.
- Each and every prenatal and postnatal pregnant woman builds some gap unknowingly, at that time family has to cover that gap in a positive way.
- Women, please be strong and ask for what you need. Sometimes without expressing, no miracles happen, so just ask.
- The husband should show love and support to the lady in each and every aspect.
- Maternal family has to take extreme care of their daughter-in-law because she is giving or has given you a bundle of joy.
- The paternal family should understand each and every need of prenatal or postnatal daughter-in-law.
- Family should encourage and impact the woman in positive ways.
- Prenatal and postnatal, a woman has to develop strength and should be strong always.
- A healthy support of a family builds strength in a pregnant lady.
- A positive lifestyle achieves positive outcomes.
- Family understanding and support can overcome postnatal depression.
- Most women go under postnatal depression and feel shy to express and they suffer without expressing.
- Family has to bring them out from that depression by reducing the gap between the lady and the family.

Self-care

The focus here is on how to counsel and communicate with women about care in the home during pregnancy through counselling, also called self-care.

Who Recommendations for Self-care during Pregnancy [3]

- Visit your health centre at least four times during your

pregnancy, even if you do not have any problems.

- If you have any concerns about your health or your baby's health, go to the health centre.
- Bring your home-based maternal record to every visit.
- Eat healthier foods including more fruits and vegetables, beans, meat, fish, eggs, cheese, milk.
- Take iron tablets and any other supplements or medicines you have been given every day as explained by your health worker.
- Rest when you can. Avoid lifting heavy objects.
- Sleep under a bednet treated with insecticide.
- Do not take any medication unless prescribed by the health centre.
- Do not drink alcohol or smoke.
- Practise safe sex, including use of a condom correctly in every sex act to prevent STIs or HIV/AIDS, if you or your partner is at risk of infection.
- Know the signs of labour – painful contractions every 20 minutes or less; bag of waters break; bloody sticky discharge.
- Know the danger signs and when to seek care

Role of Counselling

- Two-way communication: communicating with groups
- Forming an alliance: facilitating partner and family involvement
- Counselling context: providing support to household decision-making processes
- Addressing socio-cultural beliefs and practice

Conclusion

By the end of the counselling session you should be able to:

- Counsel and communicate effectively with women on self-care in the home during pregnancy.
- Consider cultural and religious beliefs in the community affecting the care a pregnant woman receives in the home and the support she receives from her partner and family.
- Assess how to involve partners and other key family members in counselling.
- Consider household decision-making dynamics.

References

1. <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/servicesandsupport/pregnancy-support-fat-hers-partners-and-carers>
2. <https://parenting.firstcry.com/articles/contribution-family-bonding-family-role-for-a-woman-during-prenatal-and-postnatal/>
3. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK304196/>