

Module 11 : High-Risk Assessment and the Management of Low Birth Weight/Preterm Babies

Session 1 : Low birth weight/ preterm and its risks

Day : 2

Time Required : 45 minutes

Purpose

To review the criteria for deciding whether a baby has low birth weight or is preterm and to discuss the risks if a baby is born with a low birth weight (LBW).

Objectives

At the end of the session the ASHA will be able to:

1. Determine if a baby has a low birth weight.
2. Define how 'preterm' is determined.
3. Explain the risks of an LBW newborn.

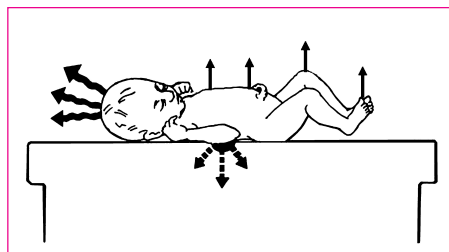
Materials : None

Training Methods

Presentation and Discussion (35 minutes)

Instructions to Trainers :

1. Ask the ASHAs what is the definition of low birth weight (LBW). (Answer: below 2500 grams) How is it determined? (*ASHA weighs the baby at first exam.*)
2. Ask the ASHAs what is the definition of preterm. (Answer: 8 months 14 days gestation or less) Ask how preterm is determined. (*Count from the first day of the last menstrual period to the day of delivery. ASHAs can also use the chart to determine EDD and preterm based on LMP.*)
3. Explain that most preterm babies, babies born too soon, are LBW but some babies at full gestation are also LBW. LBW at full gestation can be caused by:
 - Mother who is short and is under weight
 - Mother eating less quantity of food and/or not nutritious food during pregnancy
 - Mother has an illness
 - Mother has less blood (anaemia)
 - Mother works too hard during pregnancy
4. Discuss the risks of the LBW infant. Ask the ASHAs if they can mention any risks. Write them on the board or white paper. Fill in any gaps:
 - LBW infants lose body temperature faster than normal babies as they have a difficulty in maintaining their body temperature (less body fat, thinner skin, big head that loses heat fast, and poor capacity to generate body heat).
 - LBW babies are more prone to infections such as pneumonia, germs in the blood, etc.



- LBW babies may have difficulty in breastfeeding leading to weakness, poor growth, and ill health.
 - Preterm babies are at risk of jaundice (turning yellow) and if very young, of bleeding in the head, and of death.
5. Explain that LBW babies are at higher risk of dying:
- If a baby weighs 2.5 kg or more (green colour on the scale), the risk is comparable to 1 paisa in 1 rupee¹ (1 out of 100).
 - If a baby weighs less than 2.5 kg (colour yellow on the scale), the risk is comparable to 6 paisa in 1 rupee (6 out of 100).
 - If the baby is less than 2 kg (colour red on the scale), the risk is comparable to 36 paisa out of 1 rupee (36 out of 100).
 - If the baby is preterm, the risk is comparable to 36 paisa out of 1 rupee (36 out of 100).
6. Ask trainees to work on the following examples:
- Sarala was born on 3rd June, at 8 months 4 days gestation. She weighed 1.9 kg. Is she preterm? Why? What about her weight? Is she at any additional risk? What kinds of risks? *(Preterm because Sarala is less than 8 months and 14 days gestation; she is low birth weight, less than 2500 grams; she is at additional risk of hypothermia, infection, problems with breastfeeding; developing jaundice, and death.)*
 - Dharam was born at 8 months 24 days gestation and weighed 2.4 kg. Is he preterm? Why? Is he low birth weight? Why? *(Dharam is not preterm because his gestational age is above 8 months and 14 days; he does have low birth weight because he is under 2500 grams.)*

Summary (5 minutes)

- Have an ASHA review the ways to determine if a baby is preterm.
- Ask another ASHA to explain the criteria for deciding if a baby has low birth weight.
- What are the risks of being LBW or preterm?
- What causes a baby to be LBW?
- Make corrections if any and add missing information.

Evaluation of the session (5 minutes)

Objectives	Assessment Method	Output
Determine if a baby has low birth weight.	Questions and answers	-- --
Define how 'preterm' is determined	Questions and answers	--
Explain the risks of an LBW newborn.	Questions and answers	--

¹ The rupee is the Indian currency (100 paisa = one rupee).