

Module 2 : Working in the Community and Home-visiting During Pregnancy

Session 11 : Counseling cards: Health education during antenatal visits

Day : 3

Time Required: 1 hour

Purpose

To review when the ASHA will be giving health education during the antenatal home visits, and why these messages are important.

Objectives

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

1. Explain when health education is to be given to mothers.
2. Give two reasons why using visual aids with mothers can be useful.
3. Explain which counseling cards will be used at 5, 7, 8 & 9 months and why.

Materials

- Health Education Flipchart with 36 cards (cards 1-21 used during antenatal period)
- Reading Material 1 : Handout for Parents: Measures to be taken by mother before and after baby's birth

Preparation

- Bring enough copies of the Health Education Flipchart to be able to give one to each trainee.
- Ensure availability of adequate copies of Reading Material 1, depending on the number of trainees.

Training Methods

Discussion/Presentation (50 minutes)

Instructions to Trainers :

1. Explain how counseling cards are designed :
 - The Health Education Flipchart contains 36 counseling cards. Cards 1-21 are to be used during pregnancy. Cards 22 - 26 are to be used while counseling for breastfeeding on 2nd day after delivery, Cards 27-30 are to be used for counseling mothers of high risk babies, or if a baby has some problem, Card 31 will be used if the mother has a breastfeeding problem. Cards 32 to 36 are to be used for counseling mothers on 42nd day to explain continued care of baby.
 - There are illustrations on the front to help mothers remember the message and text on the back to remind the ASHA what the messages are.
 - To make it easy to decide which cards are needed when, they are colour coded. Cards in yellow colour are to be used in 5th month at the time of registration, the green ones are to be used in 7th and 9th months, those with blue colour are used on the 2nd day after delivery, the red ones are to be used as and when needed, while the pink ones are used on 42nd day after delivery.

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2. Explain that the counseling cards have been developed to assist the ASHA in providing health education and counseling support to mothers during pregnancy, delivery, and the postpartum period.
 - Health education is given at 5 months (when registering pregnant women), at the antenatal visit during the 7th month, for specific needs during the visit in the 8th month, revised at the visit during the 9th month, on Day 2 post partum and on 42nd day after delivery .
 - If there is any problem, such as with breastfeeding, or the baby is high risk, or the baby gets cold (hypothermia), an ASHA should use the appropriate cards and counsel as well as give support to the mother. She should start the specific counseling only after she has fully learnt the content.
 3. Explain that **during pregnancy**, health education is given when pregnant women are registered, at 7 months, if needed during the 8th month visit, and are revised at the 9th month visit, whenever there is a problem or if a woman has questions.
 4. Ask the trainees at what times are they supposed to register and visit pregnant women? *Answer:*
 - Women are registered in the 5th month of pregnancy.
 - They are visited during the 7th, 8th and 9th months. Health education using the counseling cards is given during the 5th, 7th and 9th month visits. During the 8th month, the counseling will be 'need specific', depending on the needs of the particular mother (for example if she isn't eating enough, you can reinforce the importance of eating more by using cards, numbered 5 and 6, which pertain to diet).
 5. Explain that today we will discuss the health education advice which should be given when visiting pregnant women.
 6. Ask "Why should we use visual aids when counseling?" Write the answers on a flipchart:
 - help to illustrate what is being said (i.e., reinforces a verbal message)
 - increase understanding
 - hold a person's attention
 - help a person remember the message
 - help to explain sensitive issues
 7. Show the 'antenatal' cards to be used. These are Cards 1-21. Explain that some of the cards are best used in early pregnancy while some are better suited for later in pregnancy. We will review all the cards and discuss when they are best used. **Remember that you should not overload the mother with too much information at any one time.**
 8. Distribute one Health Education Flipchart to each trainee.
 9. Review each antenatal card;
 - Ask what the ASHA is seeing in each illustration.
 - Ask her if they can guess what the message is from the illustration.
 - Discuss the message and ask when the card is to be used.
 - The Content Box below shows a list of the cards used in antenatal care. In some cases, there is an additional explanation for the card.
 10. Explain that we will discuss how best to use these cards in the next session.

Counseling Cards

A) At Registration: 5 months:

Cards 1-9

Care During Pregnancy

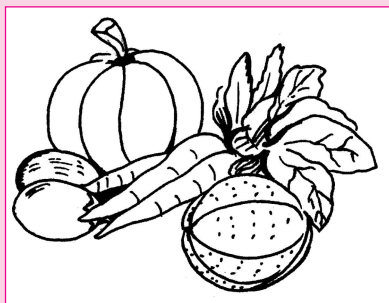
- ✓ 1. Avoid heavy work during pregnancy: Hard work can make the pregnant mother weak and undernourished, which is bad for both the mother and baby. Heavy work should be avoided as much as possible.
- ✓ 2. Tetanus toxoid: Women need at least two injections to stay protected against tetanus during the pregnancy. There has to be a gap of four weeks in between the first and second injections.

Anaemia

- ✓ 3. Anaemia: Most Indian women are anaemic. An anaemic woman feels weak; her skin, nails and tongue are pale. If a mother is anaemic, it is risky for both her and the baby. Anaemic women are particularly vulnerable during childbirth as their bodies cannot tolerate losing even moderate amounts of blood. If an anaemic woman has a problem with bleeding during or after delivery, she may even die because she does not have the 'blood' reserves of a normal healthy woman.
- ✓ 4. Take iron tablets: Pregnant women need to start taking iron pills early in pregnancy to strengthen their blood. Iron pills should not be taken with tea.

Diet During Pregnancy

- ✓ 5. Eat more than usual: Women need to eat more during pregnancy in order to make their baby healthy. Early in the pregnancy, they need to start eating more, and be regularly reminded to eat more than normal later in pregnancy.
- ✓ 6. Diet contents: Include green vegetables, yellow fruits, meat and fish. Eating more helps the mother be strong and ensures the baby is born healthy.



Complaints during Pregnancy

- ✓ 7. Night blindness: Night blindness can happen at any time during pregnancy. This message should be given to the women early and repeated.
- ✓ 8. White discharge: White vaginal discharge during pregnancy can be harmful to the mother and baby. The mother should seek treatment from ASHA or the PHC or doctor.
- ✓ 9. Fever: Fever during pregnancy can harm the baby. A pregnant woman with malaria should take tablets to treat the malaria and thereby protect the baby and herself.

B) 7th Month Visit :

Review cards 1 to 9 (*If mother remembers them, you may not need to show them again.*) Show the following cards in 7th month:

Danger Signs During Pregnancy

- ✓ 10. Swelling of hands or face: During pregnancy this can be dangerous. Go to the hospital immediately.
- ✓ 11. Fits: During pregnancy, this is dangerous for the mother and baby. Go to the hospital immediately.
- ✓ 12. Spotting and bleeding: During pregnancy spotting or bleeding is dangerous. Go to the hospital immediately.

Preparation by TBA and Mother

- ✓ 13. Preparing for birth: It is important for the mother to be prepared for the delivery and to think ahead.
- ✓ 14. Preparation by mother and TBA: TBA needs to prepare for a clean birth; mother should collect baby clothes, as well as a cloth which will be required for keeping the baby warm. Discuss with family members the possibility of referral to hospital should the need arise, and save some money.

Care at birth

- ✓ 15. Opening airway by clearing secretions: The baby has to cry and breathe immediately after delivery. If the baby doesn't cry, the ASHA will use a mucus extractor (Bilta pump) for opening airway by clearing secretions.
- ✓ 16. Giving air to baby with bag and mask: If the baby is still not breathing after clearing the secretions with the mucus extractor, the ASHA will use the bag and mask to pass air into the baby.
- ✓ 17. Vitamin K injection: All newborns, especially those with low birth weight, benefit from Injection Vitamin K soon after birth. Vitamin K helps to fortify blood and strengthen liver.
- ✓ 18. Keeping baby close to mother: Newborn babies get cold quickly which can harm them. The delivery room should be warm, & the baby dried immediately after delivery, and placed close to the mother.
- ✓ 19. Weighing the newborn: It is important to weigh newborn babies. Small babies are at greater risk of getting sick and hence need more care. CHWs will weigh babies four times in the first month. Babies who gain weight are feeding and growing well.
- ✓ 20. Avoid sweetened water: Jaggery water or sugar water given after birth can make the baby sick. If a baby is given jaggery water, it will suckle less at the breast and hence less milk will be produced.
- ✓ 21. Initiate breastfeeding early: Start breastfeeding immediately after birth; it is good for both mother and baby.

C) 9th Month Visit :

Ask if the mother has had any complaints or danger signs. Ask what she has done to prepare for delivery. Prepared baby clothes? Has she got a clean blade and soap for washing hands?

Birth Preparedness: Has she and her family talked about what they would do in case there is an emergency during the delivery? Which hospital would she go to? How would she get there? Is there money available for transport? You can explain that although all is expected to go well, it is important to plan in case there is an emergency during the delivery. If this does occur, getting to the hospital quickly can save lives.

Review cards 10-21.

11. Review any difficulties being faced by ASHAs in getting women to follow their advice. There may be resistance to some of the ideas in the cards, such as starting breastfeeding immediately after delivery. If a mother-in-law says that it is best to wait three days, what should you say? Listen to the answers. There are many ways to deal with this.
(It is not helpful to say she is wrong. You may want to ask why she thinks this way. Then ask if she knows of any babies who have started breastfeeding right after delivery. You may want to tell her about a baby you saw in Gadchiroli, who breastfed right after birth and who is growing really well. Ask if they would be willing to try breastfeeding early and that you will be there to help.)
12. Explain that if the mother remembers the cards which have been shown earlier, they may not need to show these again.
13. Clarify the messages on the cards. Make sure the ASHAs understand these messages, and when to use the cards.
14. Check if there are any questions.
15. Ask ASHAs to refer to Reading Material 1: Handout for Parents. Explain that this sheet should be given to mothers during the 7th month visit. Read the handout to mothers, and also to other family members, if they have time. Make sure they understand all the points because a well-informed mother and family can themselves do a lot to ensure the health and happiness of the newborn.

Summary (10 minutes)

- Ask the ASHAs to explain when health education is given.
- Ask the ASHAs to explain how visual aids are helpful when giving advice and counseling.
- Explain to the ASHAs when the different antenatal cards are to be used.
- Make corrections if any and add missing information.
- Praise the ASHAs for their good work.

Evaluation of the session

Objective	Assessment Method	Output
Explain when health education is to be given to mothers.	Questions and answers	--
Give two reasons why using visual aids with mothers can be useful.	Questions and answers.	--
Explain which counseling cards will be used at 5, 7, 8 and 9 months and why.	Questions and answers.	--