

Module 3 : Observing Labour and the Newborn at Birth

Session 3 : What happens during labour and birth

Day : 1

Time Required : 1 hour and 10 minutes

Purpose

To explain and discuss the process of normal labour. This will help the ASHA in identifying key events during labour and birth, and in completing the 1st part of the Delivery Form accurately. It will lay a foundation for skills to be learned later during training, when it will be important for the ASHA to understand that, what happens during labour affects the baby.

Objectives

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

1. Explain how they will know when labour starts.
2. Explain in general terms what happens during labour and birth.

Material

- Reading Material 1 : Illustrations of pregnancy and the birth process
- Health education film CD : Nanhisi Jaan
- CD player and TV set

Preparation

- Ensure availability of adequate number of copies of Reading Material 1, depending on the number of trainees.

Training Methods

Presentation and Discussion (45 minutes)

Instructions to Trainers :

1. Ask trainees to refer to the Reading Material 1.
2. Explain that the first illustration shows a side view of a woman who is pregnant – full term (likely to deliver soon). The second illustration shows the uterus and the baby inside it. Ask the ASHAs to identify the uterus, the position of the baby, the mouth of the uterus (cervix), membrane of the bag of water, the placenta, and the cord. Clarify any doubts.
3. Explain that most babies are in this position at birth: head first. Sometimes, the baby's bottom or a leg or an arm come first. If this happens, it can be a more difficult (or even impossible) delivery for the mother and the baby. The baby is more at risk if its position is not 'head first'.
4. Ask the ASHAs if they know the signs that real labour is starting. Listen to the answers. Praise correct answers, which should include:
 - Pains are irregular at the beginning but become more regular.
 - Pains start from the back and move to the front.
 - Pains start coming closer together, lasting longer and are stronger (when pains are about five minutes apart, from beginning of one to the beginning of the other, early labour has started).
 - 'Show' appears. This is a sticky jelly mixed with blood which flows out of the vagina.

5. Ask the ASHAs if they can tell you what the pains (or contractions) do? Listen to their answers. Explain that the pains are caused by the muscles in the womb tightening and pulling open the mouth of the womb.
6. Have trainees look at the third illustration, containing (a) a drawing of the side view of a pregnant woman, and seven closer views (b to h) of the baby in the process of delivery. Looking at the (b), point out that the mouth of the womb is almost closed, and is thick. In (c), the mouth is thinner and is opening a little. In (d), the mouth of the womb is fully open. When the womb is completely open, it is the end of the first stage of labour. At this time, the bag of waters usually breaks. This first stage of labour usually lasts about 8 to 12 hours. It takes longer if the woman is having her first baby.
7. Have trainees look at the 3rd set of illustrations a to d & the e, f, g and h close-ups. During the second stage of labour, the baby moves down the birth canal until the baby's head is showing at the opening of the vagina. Look at the 4th set of illustrations. These show what you can see on the outside when the baby starts to move through the vagina in the process of being born. During each contraction, a little more of the head is seen (a,b,c). The very top of the head comes first, then the eyes, nose and mouth (d). While in most babies, the eyes are facing the floor; sometimes they are born looking towards the ceiling. When the baby's head is out, it turns to one side (e) and the shoulders and the rest of the body are delivered (f). Once out, the baby will cry. The cord will be connected to the placenta which is still inside the womb (illustration 5(a)). The placenta usually comes out after 15-20 minutes (usually no longer than 30 minutes) (illustration 5(b)).
8. Explain the three stages of labour (see Content Box).

Content Box :

Three Stages of Labour

1st Stage of labour: Starts from the beginning of pains ((a) of the 3rd illustration) until the mouth of the womb is fully open ((d) of the 3rd illustration). This happens inside and cannot be seen. The bag of water also breaks. The fluid is usually clear but may be yellow or green or red. *This first stage of labour usually lasts about 8 to 12 hours.*

2nd Stage of labour: Contractions push the baby out of the womb: the delivery of the baby (e,f,g,h of the 3rd illustration). *This second stage of labour usually lasts about 1 hour.*

3rd Stage of labour: The contractions cause the placenta to peel off: delivery of the placenta (illustration 5 (a & b)). *This third stage of labour usually lasts about 20 to 30 minutes.*

9. Show the Health Education film CD Nanhisi Jaan for head presentation and delivery of baby (time : 7.34 to 8.24) and delivery of placenta (time : 22.45 to 23.20) to ASHAs.
10. Check for any questions and clarify any confusion, or misconceptions.

Summary (5 minutes)

- Ask a trainee to describe how they will know that labour is starting.
- Ask a trainee to explain what happens in the womb during labour.
- Have a trainee explain the three parts or stages of labour.
- Make corrections if any are required, and add missing information.
- Praise the ASHAs for their good work.

Evaluation of the session (5 minutes)

Objective	Assessment Method	Output
Explain how they will know when labour starts	Discussion/questions and answers	--
Explain in general terms what happens during labour and birth.	Discussion/questions and answers	--