

Chapter 4:

Prenatal Development and Birth

Pregnancy: The Mother's Perspective



1st Trimester

- Physical Experience
 - Missed period
 - Tender, enlarged breasts
 - Morning sickness (misnomer)
 - Tired
- Cognitive Experience
 - Nervous about miscarriage
 - Excited

2nd Trimester

- Physical
 - Most women feel less morning sickness
 - Weight gain
 - Feel baby move for the first time
 - Hair changes (fuzz on tummy, etc...)
- Cognitive
 - Excited to see baby (ultrasound)
 - Starting to bond
 - Feel unattractive
 - Clothes don't fit anymore

3rd Trimester

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – More Weight gain – Frequent urination – incontinence – Hard to breath – Trouble sleeping – Difficulty getting up, rolling over – Back pain – Swelling, Edema – Hip discomfort | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical cont'd <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Heart burn – Constipation – Stretch marks • Cognitive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Excitement for birth – Fear, apprehension – Not in control of body – Need to "nest" – "baby brain" |
|---|---|

Birth

Pain, Anesthesia, and Drugs

- Pain is a subjective, psychological phenomenon that cannot be easily measured
- Epidural anesthesia produces numbness from the waist down and an inability to walk or push during delivery
- Walking epidurals, or dual spinal epidurals, use smaller needles and administer a continuous dose of anesthetic so woman may walk around and have fewer side effects
- Effects on baby and mom?

Approaches to childbirth

- **Natural childbirth: Bradley Method**
 - aims to reduce pain by decreasing fear and educating parents
- **Prepared childbirth: [Lamaze](#)**
 - special breathing and education about anatomy and physiology.

The Bradley Method

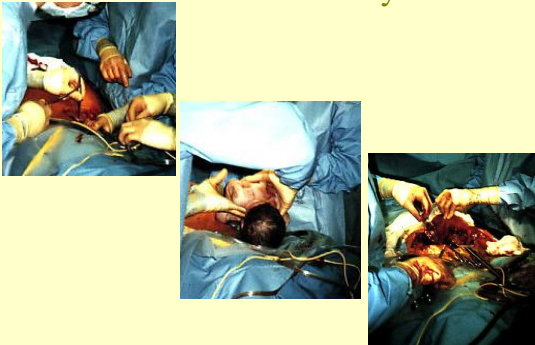
- Natural childbirth - Nearly 90% of Bradley® moms having vaginal births do so without pain medication.
- Active participation by the husband/partner as coach.
- Excellent nutrition (the foundation of a healthy pregnancy and baby).
- Avoidance of drugs during pregnancy, birth, and breastfeeding, unless absolutely necessary.

The Bradley Method cont'd

- Relaxation and NATURAL breathing
- "Tuning-in" to your own body and trusting the natural process.
- Immediate and continuous contact with your new baby.
- Breastfeeding, beginning at birth provides immunities and nutrition.
- Parents taking responsibility for the safety of the birth place, procedures, attendants, and emergency back-up.
- Parents being prepared for unexpected situations such as emergency childbirth and cesarean section.

- **Other non-medicated techniques to reduce pain**
 - **Waterbirth**
 - **Hypnosis**
 - **Acupuncture**
 - **Massage**
 - **Music therapy**

Cesarean Delivery



Cesarean Delivery:

- May need to be used if baby is in breech position or other complications.
- Women in need of cesarean delivery are more quickly identified.
- Doctors may order cesarean out of caution, and to avoid lawsuit if there is a possibility of maternal or fetal distress.
- Many today are choosing cesarean delivery.
- VBAC (Vaginal Birth After Cesarean)
- Today, 29.1 percent of all US births are cesarean.
- 1999 study of 3283 women in Sweden found only 8% wanted a C-section (fear of birth, anxiety, previous c-section)

C-Section v. Vaginal Birth

- **Physical problems in mothers:**
 - potentially life-threatening problems,
 - hemorrhage (severe bleeding),
 - blood clots
 - bowel obstruction
 - more common concerns
 - longer-lasting and more severe pain
 - infection.
 - scarring and *adhesion* tissue increase risk for ongoing pelvic pain and for twisted bowel.

C-Section v. Vaginal Birth

- Longer Hospitalization of mothers
- Emotional well-being of mothers
- Early contact with, feelings toward babies
- Breastfeeding

C-Section v. Vaginal Birth

- **Health of babies:** Babies born by cesarean are more likely to:
 - **be cut** during the surgery (usually minor)
 - **have breathing difficulties** around the time of birth
 - **experience asthma** in childhood and in adulthood.

C-Section v. Vaginal Birth

- **Future reproductive problems for mothers:** The likelihood of experiencing some of these conditions goes up sharply as the number of previous cesareans increases. *ectopic pregnancy*
 - **reduced fertility**
 - *placenta previa*
 - *placenta accreta*
 - *placental abruption*
 - *rupture of the uterus*

C-Section v. Vaginal Birth

- **Concerns about babies in future pregnancies:** A cesarean section in this pregnancy can affect the babies of future pregnancies. Studies have found that they are more likely to:
 - **be born too early** (*preterm*)
 - **weigh less than they should** (*low birthweight*)
 - **have a physical abnormality or injury** to their brain or spinal cord
 - **die** before or shortly after the birth

C-Section v. Vaginal Birth

- **Extra risks associated with vaginal birth:** In a few areas, mothers or babies with vaginal birth have poorer outcomes in comparison with cesarean birth.
- **Perineal pain**
- **Incontinence**
 - (*urinary incontinence*)
 - (*bowel incontinence*).
- **Nerve injury in babies:** In comparison with a baby born by cesarean section, a baby who is born vaginally is more likely to have a nerve injury that affects the shoulder, arm or hand.

Physical Appearance and Initial Encounter

- The neonate is covered by vernix, a thick, greasy substance that covers the entire infant.
- The infant is also covered in fuzz, called lanugo, which soon disappears.
- Bonding of parent to infant has its strongest components at this moment after birth.
 - C-section, premature babies, & others...not given directly to mom?
 - Breastfeeding v. bottle feeding

- **Bonding (formation of emotional attachment) between infant and mother:**
 - Usually occurs in period shortly after birth.
 - Critical component in child's development.
 - Isolation of premature baby and use of drugs in birth process may harm bonding process.
 - Some experts advocate a rooming-in arrangement while mother and child are in the hospital.

A Father's Adjustment:

- Generally ignored, but fathers go through considerable adjustment.
- Some feel baby has replaced them in terms of mother's affection.
- Fathers should actively care for the baby.
- Parents should set aside time to be together.

**"The Virgin Mary Nursing Her Child"
Hans Memling**

