



Wolters Kluwer
Health

Lippincott
Williams & Wilkins

Maternity and Pediatric Nursing

Chapter 15 Postpartum Adaptations



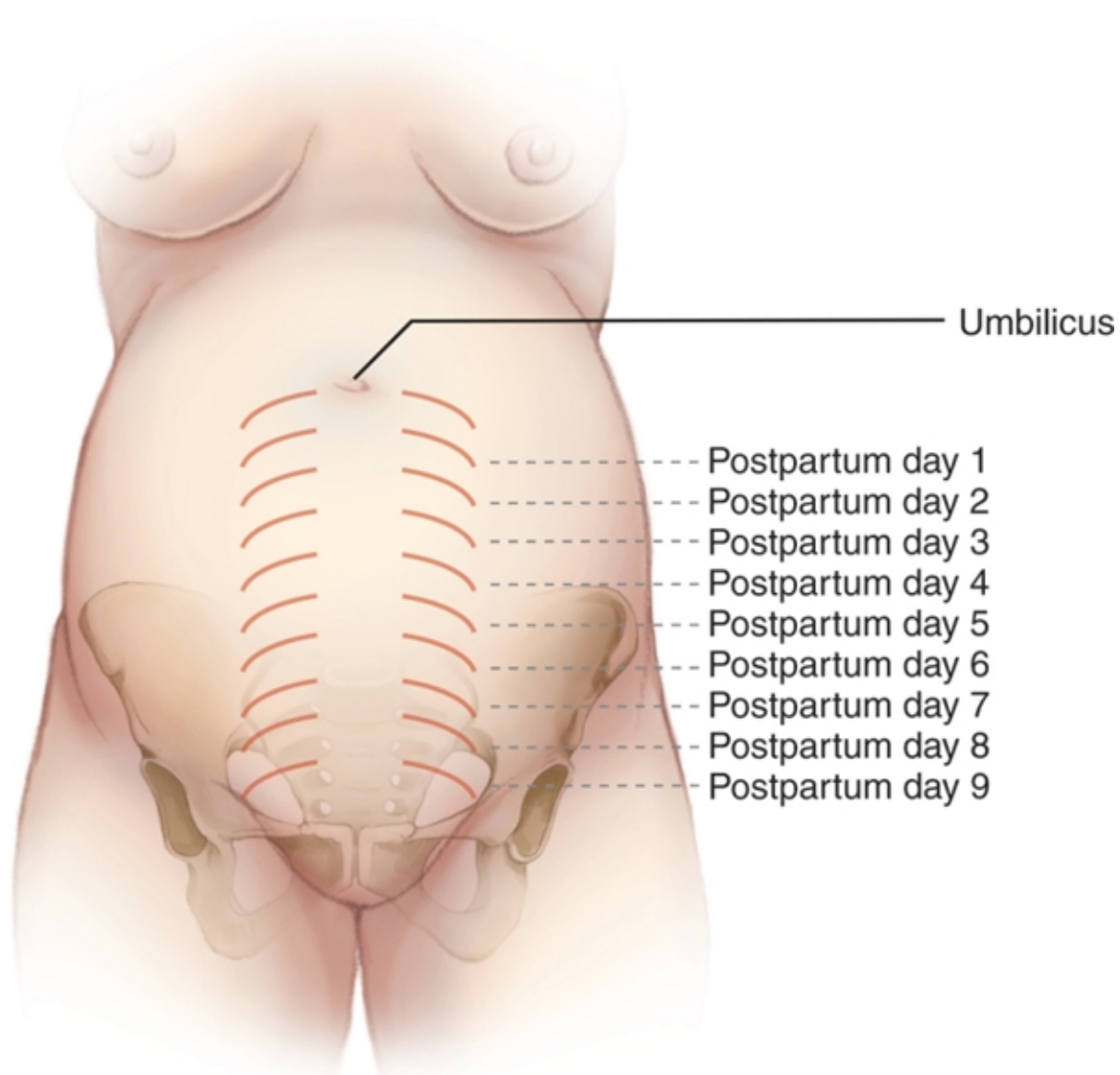
Postpartum Period

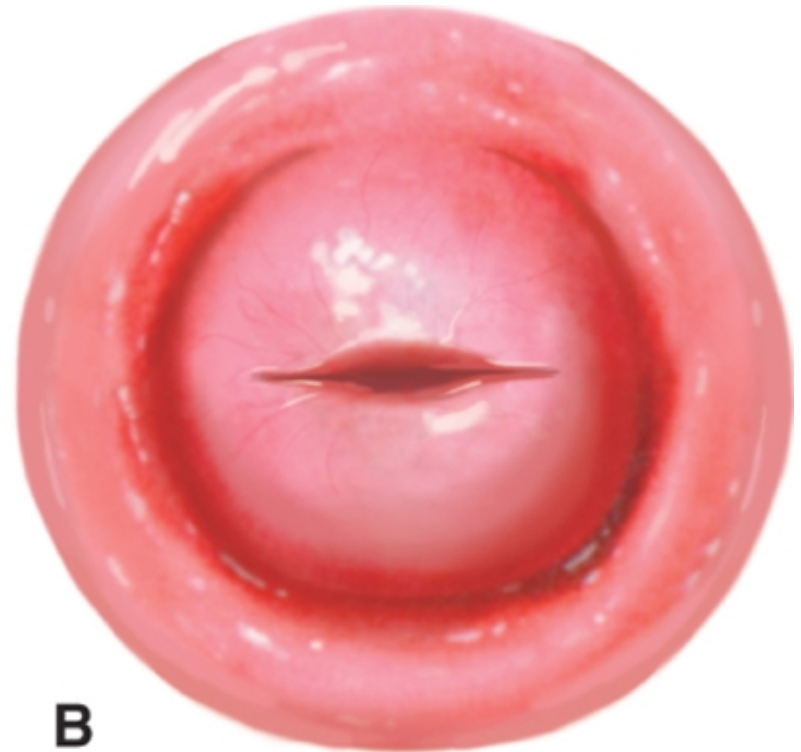
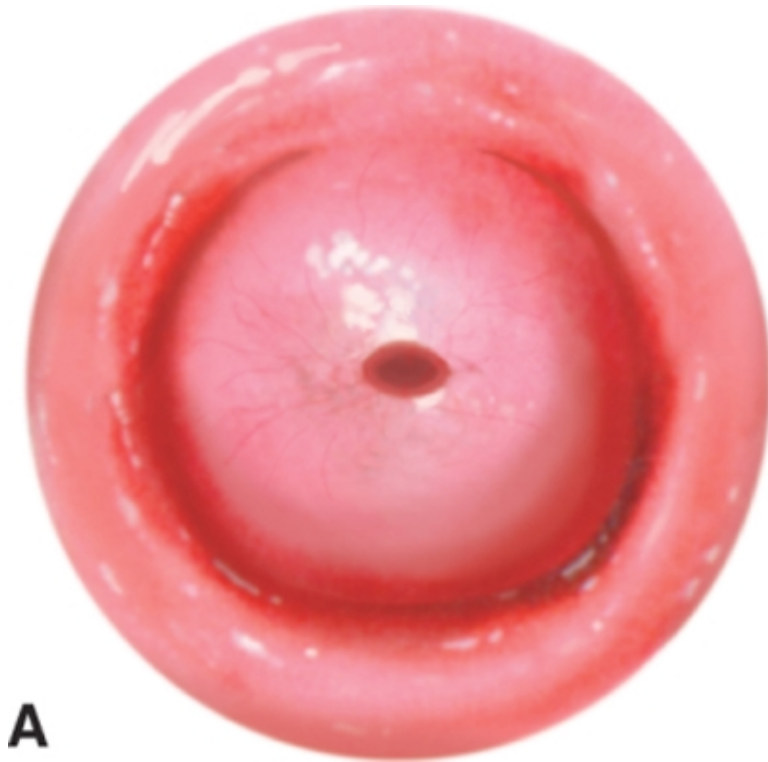
- Critical transition period for woman, newborn, and family physiologically and psychologically
- Puerperium: period after delivery of placenta, lasting for 6 weeks
- Possible definition: changes in all aspects of mother's life that occur during the first year following birth of child
- Maternal physiologic and psychological changes
- Mother and family adjustment to new family member



Reproductive System Adaptations

- Uterus
 - Involution: contraction of muscle fibers; catabolism; regeneration of uterine epithelium
 - Lochia: rubra, serosa, alba
 - Afterpains
- Cervix: closure; now appearing as jagged slit-like opening. Vagina: eventual thickening and return of rugae.
- Perineum







Question

Is the following statement True or False?

After birth, the cervix returns to its prepregnant shape.



Answer

False.

After delivery, the cervix closes but never regains its prepregnant appearance. It is no longer circular but appears as a jagged slit-like opening.



Cardiovascular System Adaptations

- Blood volume and cardiac output
- Hematocrit level
- Pulse rate and blood pressure
- Coagulation factors
- Red blood cell production



Urinary System Adaptations

- Glomerular filtration rate
- Voiding sensation: affected by:
 - Perineal lacerations
 - Generalized swelling and bruising of the perineum and tissues surrounding the urinary meatus
 - Hematomas
 - Decreased bladder tone due to regional anesthesia
 - Diminished sensation of bladder pressure due to swelling, poor bladder tone, and numbing effects of regional anesthesia used during labor
- Diuresis



GI System Adaptations

- Relief of pressure on organs
- Bowel tone and peristalsis
- Hunger and thirst



Musculoskeletal System Adaptations

- Joints
- Fatigue levels
- Abdominal muscle tone



Question

Is the following statement True or False?

The drop in maternal blood volume after birth leads to a similar drop in hematocrit.



Answer

False.

Despite the decrease in blood volume, the hematocrit level remains relatively stable and may even increase, reflecting the predominant loss of plasma.



Integumentary System Adaptations

- Pigmentation
- Stretch marks
- Diaphoresis



Respiratory and Endocrine System Adaptations

- Respiratory system
 - Respiratory rate
 - Diaphragm position
- Endocrine system
 - Estrogen and progesterone levels
 - Placental hormones
 - Prolactin levels



Lactation

- Secretion of milk by the breasts
- Result of interaction of progesterone, estrogen, prolactin, and oxytocin
- Typically appearing 3 days after childbirth



Wolters Kluwer
Health

Lippincott
Williams & Wilkins





Lactation (cont'd)

- **Engorgement**

- Process of swelling of the breast tissue due to an increase in blood and lymph supply as a precursor to lactation
- Frequent emptying, warm showers and compresses before feeding, cold compresses between feedings, if breast feeding
- Tight supportive bra, ice, avoidance of breast stimulation



Ovulation and Return of Menstruation

- Interplay of hormones: estrogen, progesterone, prolactin, and oxytocin
- Nonlactating women: return of menstruation 7 to 9 weeks after birth
- Lactating women: return dependent on breast-feeding frequency and duration; anywhere from 2 to 18 months



Question

For the woman who is not breast-feeding her newborn, which measure would be most appropriate to relieve engorgement?

- A. Warm showers
- B. Nipple stimulation
- C. Ice to the breasts
- D. Manually expressing milk



Answer

C.

For the woman who is not breast-feeding, measures to relieve engorgement include applying ice to the breasts for 15 to 20 minutes every other hour. Warm showers promote the let-down reflex and are encouraged for the woman who is breast-feeding and experiencing engorgement. Any stimulation of the breasts, such as nipple stimulation or manual milk expression, is to be avoided for the woman who is not breast-feeding.



Maternal Psychological Adaptations

- Reva Rubin's 3 phases
 - Taking-in phase: the time immediately after birth when the client needs sleep, depends on others to meet her needs, and relives the events of the birth process
 - Taking-hold phase: the second phase of maternal adaptation, characterized by dependent and independent maternal behavior
 - Letting-go phase: the third phase of maternal adaptation, occurring later in the postpartum period as the woman reestablishes relationships with other people



Partner Psychological Adaptations

- Engrossment: development of bond to newborn characterized by 7 behaviors:
 - Visual awareness of the newborn
 - Tactile awareness of the newborn
 - Perception of the newborn as perfect
 - Strong attraction to the newborn
 - Awareness of distinct features of the newborn
 - Extreme elation by the father
 - Increased sense of self-esteem



Partner Psychological Adaptations (cont'd)

- Three-Stage Role Development Process
 - Expectations
 - Reality
 - Transition to mastery



End of Presentation