Postnatal Palpation/care
Puerperium

- 6 week postnatal period
- Begins immediately following the delivery of the placenta and membranes
- Ends with the return of fertility.
Aims of the Postnatal Period.

• Assist and help the woman’s recovery to the pre-pregnant state.
• Assess and identify deviations from the norm.
• Educate the woman about her own self care and the care of the infant.
• Postnatal period.

• Care Shared;
• Midwife: Hospital/Community
  Duty of care usually 10 days can extend to 28 days.
• Obstetrician
• GP
• Health visitor

prgmea.com
The normal puerperium

- Uterine involution
  Uterus return to its pre-pregnant size, position and tone.
  The vagina, uterine ligaments and muscles of the pelvic floor all revert back.
Physiology of involution

- Haemostasis is achieved in 3 ways:
  - Ischaemia.
  - Pressure-apposition of the uterus forming a T-shaped cavity.
  - Clotting mechanism.
- Autolysis
- Phagocytosis
Postnatal Risks.

- Haemorrhage.
- Hypovolaemic Shock.
- Infection.
- Postnatal depression
Lochia.

Lochia Rubra. (red)
- Persists for approx. 3 days.
- Decidua and blood from the placental site.
- Initially sterile then the flora begins to colonize by vaginal flora.
Lochia serosa. (Pink-brown)

- Contains leukocytes, mucous, vaginal epithelial cells, necrotic decidua, non-pathological bacteria.

- May be blood stained for 3-4 weeks.

- Characteristic sweetish odour.
Lochia Alba (Yellow-white).

- Mostly serous fluid and leukocytes.

- Plus some cervical mucous and organisms.

(Coad et al 2001)
Fundal Palpation.

• Palpate the uterus through the uterine wall reduction in size approx. 1cm per day.
• Measure the height of the uterus.
• Assess the position, and tone of the uterus.
  Position= Central
  Tone = Firm and well contracted.
MEASURING THE SYMPHYSISO - FUNDAL HEIGHT
Subinvolution
Slow rate of involution.

Causes.
• LSCS
• Retained products of conception.
• Prolonged labour
• Multiple pregnancy.
• Full bladder.
• Secondary infection.

Factors to enhance involution.
• Uncomplicated labour/birth.
• Breast feeding.
• Early ambulation.
Signs and Symptoms of Sub-involution.

Prolonged lochia rubra
Offensive lochia.
Delayed involution
Lactation

Colostrum

- Present from 16 weeks
- High in density low in volume.
- Contains more protein, minerals and fat soluble vitamins A&K than more mature milk. Less lactose, fats and water soluble vitamins than mature milk.
Mature breast milk

• Variable within and between women
• Contents change from one feed to another, over the course of a specific feed and as the baby grows and develops.
• Feed consists of foremilk and hind milk.
Problems with breast feeding.

May result from:

- Mothers attitude.
- Problems with the breast/nipple.
- Anatomical or systemic disorders affecting the baby.
- Poor breast feeding technique.
Post natal examination

- Performed at 6 weeks
- By GP or obstetrician
- Includes baby medical (2\textsuperscript{nd})
Post-natal examination

Mother

- General condition
- Cessation of lochia
- Menstruation resumed/ Vaginal discharge
- Urinary symptoms/ Bowels
Physical examination

- Urine: Protein, Glucose,
- B/P.
- Breasts
- Abdomen
- Uterus
- Cervix
- Cervical smear
- Advise for future pregnancy/contraception