

Nature and Characteristics of After Pain among Postnatal Mothers

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Abdominal after pains are cramping pains experienced by mothers after childbirth as a part of the uterine involution. Involution is the process by which the reproductive organs return to their prepregnant state. To prevent further blood loss, the uterus and the placental site undergo rapid contractions soon after childbirth which is attributed to be the cause of after pain.

Objectives: The objective of the study was to assess the nature and characteristics of after pain among postnatal mothers at a tertiary care hospital in Kochi.

Design and Methods: A prospective survey design using quota sampling was used to select 25 postnatal mothers (13 mothers who had caesarean section and 12 mothers who had normal vaginal delivery) who were between 6-12 hours postpartum and were admitted in the postnatal wards of a tertiary care hospital in Kochi. A demographic proforma was used to collect the background information and a Postnatal Pain Questionnaire was designed to assess the after pain and its characteristics every 24 hours till 3 postpartum days.

Results: Four mothers (16%) experienced after pain on the day 1 and 4 after delivery whereas 12 mothers (48%) perceived after pain on the second and third postpartum days respectively. Severe intensity of after pain was experienced on the third postpartum day. 28 percent of mothers agreed that the pain is similar to menstrual cramps. Most of the mothers (44%) felt the pain on either side of the abdomen which they referred to as 'like stone moving'. Breast feeding was the main aggravating factor of pain for 32% of the mothers.

No significant association was found between abdominal after pain and the variables- weight of the baby, age of the mother and parity at P values: 0.653, 1 and 1 respectively (Fisher's Exact Test). There was significant association found between mode of delivery and the level of abdominal after pain at P-value 0.047.

Keywords: Nature, Characteristics, After pain, Postnatal mothers

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