

Glossary

- A**
- Abdominal effleurage:** soft massage of the abdomen
- Abortion:** removal of products of conception from the uterus before viable fetal life
- Abruptio placentae:** separation of a normally implanted placenta from the uterine wall before birth
- Abstinence:** voluntary self-deprivation of potential pleasures (e.g., certain foods, alcohol, or sexual activity)
- Acceleration:** rise in baseline fetal heart rate for a period of time
- Acme:** peak intensity of a uterine contraction
- Acquired disorder:** bodily condition not inherited genetically
- Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS):** serious impairment of cell immunologic functions occurring after a long incubation time, followed by prolonged debilitating body conditions that usually result in death
- Acrocyanosis:** bluish color of hands or feet caused by poor peripheral circulation
- Active acquired immunity:** antibody responses to illness or immunization
- Active phase:** the second phase of labor in which the cervix dilates from 3 or 4 cm to full dilation
- Afterpains:** abdominal cramp-like pains caused by uterine contractions after birth; they may last for a few days and tend to be more severe during breastfeeding
- Alpha-fetoprotein (AFP):** glycoprotein produced by the fetal development process that crosses the placenta and can be detected in the maternal blood; can be used as a marker for Down syndrome (decreased AFP) and neural tube defects (increased AFP)
- Amnion:** the innermost fetal membrane that forms the sac holding the embryo/fetus and amniotic fluid
- Amniotic fluid embolism:** leakage of amniotic and fetal matter into the maternal circulation; blocks pulmonary circulation and causes a life-threatening situation
- Amniotomy:** mechanical rupturing of fetal membranes using an instrument
- Ampulla:** outer area of the fallopian tube where fertilization of the ovum occurs
- Androgen:** substance that produces testosterone and other male characteristics
- Anencephaly:** lack of cerebral hemispheres and skull encasing the brain due to a congenital deformation
- Anovulatory cycle:** menstrual cycle in which an ovum is not released
- Anovulatory:** absence of ovulation
- Anterior fontanel:** diamond-shaped area above the newborn's forehead that is formed by two frontal and two parietal bones; it typically closes between 12 and 18 months
- Antiretroviral therapy:** drug regimen used to destroy or suppress viruses
- Appgar score:** numerical assessment system for infant heart rate, respiratory effort, muscle tone, reflex irritability, and color; it is taken at 1 and 5 minutes after birth
- Apnea:** cessation of respirations for 15 to 20 seconds, or long enough to cause cyanosis; it is of unknown cause and occurs 24 to 48 hours after birth; it resolves spontaneously in a few days with no special treatment
- Asphyxia:** decrease in oxygen and accumulation of carbon dioxide due to gas exchange problems; creates a life-threatening condition
- Asymmetric intrauterine growth restriction:** higher percentile growth rate of fetal length to head circumference than standardized weight-based rates
- Atony:** absence of uterine muscle tone
- Attachment:** affection-forming relationship and feeling of bonding between humans that occurs over time
- Augmentation of labor:** pharmacologic or physical methods of labor stimulation and uterine contractions after natural labor has begun
- Autosome:** chromosome included in the 22 pairs that is identical in males and females
- B**
- Babinski reflex:** a normal infant response characterized by hyperextension of the toes and dorsiflexion of the great toe upon stroking of the sole of the foot
- Bacterial vaginosis:** a vaginal bacteria infection characterized by a grayish discharge and a foul fishy odor
- Ballottement:** examination technique involving finger tapping to detect a floating fetus during pregnancy; the fetus is pushed away and rebounds against the examiner's fingers
- Baseline fetal heart rate:** average fetal heart rate between contractions and accelerations of labor
- Beat-to-beat variability:** variations in fetal heart rate between one beat and the next over a short interval

Bilirubin: a yellow bile pigment associated with jaundice that is produced during the destruction of red blood cells

Biophysical profile (BPP): noninvasive fetal risk assessment based on breathing, body movement, volume of amniotic fluid, fetal heart rate, and tone

Birth rate: calculation of annual rate of births per 1,000 people

Blastocyst: inner cell mass of the morula occurring approximately 3 days after fertilization; it develops into the embryo

Bloody show: secretion of blood-tinged vaginal discharge resulting from rupture of small capillaries in the cervix as it begins to dilate about 24 to 48 hours before labor

Boggy: adjective used to describe softening of the uterus that occurs due to a lack of muscle tissue contraction; carries a risk for postpartum hemorrhage

Brachial palsy: partial or complete paralysis of arm parts resulting from prolonged labor or difficult birth

Braxton Hicks contractions: intermittent, painless uterine contractions occurring during pregnancy without cervical dilation; they are not associated with true labor but are sometimes mistaken as such and referred to as “false labor”

Breast self-examination (BSE): touching and visual inspection of the breasts to detect abnormalities such as masses, nipple discharge, or changes that could indicate malignancy or conditions needing assessment

Breech presentation: the fetal buttocks or feet appear in the maternal pelvis first instead of the head

Bronchopulmonary dysplasia (BPD): chronic pulmonary disease that occurs from the use of mechanical ventilation and high levels of oxygen in the weeks after birth

Brown adipose tissue: fetal and neonate fat deposits around the kidneys and adrenals, in the neck, between the scapulae, and behind the sternum

C

Caput succedaneum: soft tissue swelling or edema in or under the fetal scalp due to birth trauma

Carcinoma in situ: cancer contained only in the cells of an organ in which it originated without spreading to other tissue

Cardinal movements of labor: natural fetal position changes and movements that are accommodated by the maternal pelvis as the fetus moves from the abdominal region through the birth canal to delivery

Cephalhematoma: subperiosteal collection of blood in the infant’s skull due to blood vessel rupture during labor and birth; lasts for a few weeks to 2 months

Cephalofetal disproportion: abnormal condition of fetal head size, shape, or position preventing descent through the maternal pelvis for delivery

Cerclage: suturing used to close a recurrent premature dilation of the cervix, which usually occurs between 14 and 20 weeks of gestation

Cervical cap: cup-shaped mechanical barrier contraceptive that is held in place over the cervix by suction

Cervical dilation: gradual widening of the cervical opening from less than 1 cm to nearly 10 cm to accommodate passage of the fetal head

Cervical funneling: recess in the cervix that is commonly associated with recurrent premature dilation of the cervix

Cervical ripening: softening and thinning of the cervix through the normal physiologic labor process or through induction of labor

Cesarean section: fetal delivery through a surgical incision in the abdominal wall and uterus

Chadwick’s sign: violet or blue discoloration in the vaginal mucous membranes visible during pregnancy around the fourth week; due to vasocongestion

Childbirth education: prenatal courses that focus on breathing, relaxation, and position techniques during labor; the goal is to minimize the need for medication and medical procedures

Chlamydia infection: the most common sexually transmitted bacterial infection in the United States; caused by *Chlamydia trachomatis*; a frequent cause of sterility

Chloasma: a brown or darker pigmentation of the nose, forehead, and cheeks during pregnancy or from ingesting oral contraceptives; referred to as a “mask of pregnancy”

Chorioamnionitis: infection of the chorion, amnion, and amniotic fluid caused by organisms that can be transferred to the fetus; potentially life-threatening to the infant

Chorion: outer fetal membrane closest to the uterine wall that is lined by the trophoblast and mesoderm surrounding the amnion; forms the fetal area of the placenta

Chorionic villi: hair-like projections that carry vascular circulation to the fetus

Chorionic villus sampling: procedure to obtain fetal cells during the first trimester in order to diagnose chromosomal and congenital disorders

Chromosome: hair-like chromatin structures of the cell nucleus that contain genetic information as codes in DNA

Chronic hypertension: maternal hypertension occurring prior to week 20 of gestation, or hypertension that continues 42 days past childbirth

Circumcision: surgical removal of foreskin from the penis

Circumoral cyanosis: bluish coloration around the mouth

Clitoris: small oval-shaped area comprising erectile tissue at the anterior junction of the female vulva; homologous to the penis

Coitus interruptus: contraceptive technique in which the man withdraws his penis from the woman's vagina prior to ejaculation

Cold stress: excessive loss of body heat resulting in a compensatory mechanism such as increased respirations to maintain the core body temperature

Colostrum: yellowish breast secretion of serum and white blood cells that precedes mature breast milk; has a high level of protein and some immune and cleansing properties for the newborn's intestinal tract

Colposcopy: procedure in which a magnifying lens is inserted into the vagina for cervical and vaginal tissue examination

Conception: process in which the ovum is fertilized by union with sperm

Condom: mechanical contraceptive device that blocks sperm from entering the vagina; it is worn over the erect penis or in the female vagina; also helps prevent sexually transmitted infections

Conduction: heat transfer to a cooler area or surface through direct skin contact

Contraction stress test: method used to assess fetal reaction to natural or induced contractions

Contraction: regular or periodic tightening and shortening of the uterine muscles during natural or artificially induced labor, causing effacement and dilation of the cervix

Convection: heat transfer to cooler air from a warm body surface

Coombs test: test to check for either Rh-positive antibodies in maternal red blood cells or Rh-positive antibodies in fetal cord red blood cells

Corpus luteum: small yellow glandular mass that develops within a ruptured ovarian follicle after it has matured and discharged its ovum

Corpus: the upper two thirds of the uterus

Cotyledons: subdivisions composed of villi that are located along the uterine surface of the placenta

Crowning: appearance of the fetal head at the vulvar opening during labor

Cyanosis: blue coloration of the infant's chest, face, fingers, toes, or mucous membranes as a result of the circulatory system's inability to oxygenate the tissues fully

Cystocele: a bulge in the anterior vaginal wall as a result of downward displacement of the bladder

D

Deceleration: periodic slowing of the fetal heart rate below baseline

Decidua: nourishing cell membrane surrounding the fetus in the uterus that is shed after childbirth

Depo-Provera: progestin contraceptive that can be injected for long-term use

Descent: start of the downward movement of the fetal presenting position into the pelvis

Dilatation and curettage (D&C): dilation of the cervix and passage of a curet to scrape the endometrium; performed to eliminate the uterine contents and end pregnancy, or to obtain tissue for examination

Dilation: gradual expansion of the external os of the cervix from a few millimeters to 10 cm so that the fetus can be born

Disseminated intravascular coagulation (DIC): complex hemorrhagic disorder resulting in tissue necrosis and bleeding; possibly caused by sepsis, fetal demise, or abruptio placentae

Dizygotic: fetuses derived from two separate zygotes; referred to as fraternal twins

Doula: a companion, possibly paid, who attends to the needs of a pregnant woman through labor

Down syndrome: a genetic birth defect resulting from an extra chromosome (number 21)

Ductus arteriosus: a shunt between the pulmonary artery and the descending aorta of the fetus

Ductus venosus: a fetal shunt passing through the liver and carrying oxygenated blood between the umbilical vein and the inferior vena cava

Duration: the length of time a contraction lasts

Dysfunctional labor pattern: labor that does not exhibit normal processes

Dysfunctional uterine bleeding (DUB): any deviation from usual uterine bleeding

Dysmenorrhea: painful side effects of menstruation, including cramping in the lower abdomen, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and headache

Dyspareunia: pain associated with sexual intercourse

Dystocia: failed or difficult progression of labor due to physical problems between the fetus and the maternal pelvis, or from uterine or other muscular problems

E

Early-onset deceleration: fetal heart rate slowing in which the head compresses at the onset of a uterine contraction; as the contraction ends, the fetal heart rate slowly returns to baseline

Eclampsia: a major seizure complication of unknown causes that sometimes occurs after 20 weeks of gestation or within 48 hours postpartum

Ectopic pregnancy: implantation of a fertilized ovum in the fallopian tubes, ovaries, or abdomen instead of the usual location (the lining of the uterus)

EDB: estimated date of birth

EDC: estimated date of confinement or fetal due date

Effacement: process of thinning, shortening, and flattening of the cervix that occurs late in pregnancy or during labor

Ejaculation: release of seminal fluids due to stimulation of the penis

Electronic fetal monitoring: monitoring device placed on the fetus for continuous tracking and assessment of fetal heart rate characteristics

Embryo: name for the developing organism between 2 and 8 weeks of gestation

Emergency contraception: postcoital pregnancy-prevention methods

Endometrial biopsy: procedure used during a fertility workup to obtain information about the effects on the uterus of progesterone produced by the corpus luteum after ovulation and endometrial receptivity

Endometriosis: chronic condition in which endometrial tissue grows outside the uterus in the pelvic cavity; often associated with infertility

Endometritis: infection of the inner uterus lining

Endometrium: inner cellular lining of the uterus that is shed during menses

En-face positioning: parent and newborn maintain the same face-to-face vertical plane of vision

Engorgement: swelling of breast tissue from congestion due to increased blood supply and lymph supply after childbirth and before true lactation starts

Engrossment: parental (particularly paternal) sense of intense interest during early contact with the newborn

Epidural: technique used to provide local anesthesia to the lower body in which the anesthetic is instilled into the epidural space and transfers to the nerve roots exiting the dura

Episiotomy: surgical incision of the perineum to enlarge the vaginal opening to facilitate birth

Epispadias: condition in which the urethral meatus is located on the top surface of the penis

Erythema toxicum: temporary, pink, irregular, papular rash with superimposed vesicles

Erythroblastosis fetalis: hemolytic disease of the newborn caused by maternal antibodies; results in anemia, jaundice, enlarged liver and spleen, and generalized edema

Esophageal atresia: condition in which the esophagus ends in a pouch or narrows to a thin cord unconnected to the stomach

Estrogen: female sex hormone that is produced by the ovary and stored in fat cells; it influences reproduction

Evaporation: loss of heat resulting from water on the skin surface being converted to vapor

Evidence-based practice: medical decisions that are made based on conscientious problem-solving approaches from explicit, judicious use of research data, statistical analysis, and other reliable information sources

Exchange transfusion: replacement of circulating blood by withdrawal of the recipient's blood and

injection of an equal amount of donor blood; done to prevent accumulation of bilirubin or other byproducts of hemolysis in the blood

External os: portion of the cervix opening into the vagina

Extremely low birthweight: neonate birth weight of 1,000 g or less

F

Face presentation: descent of fetus with hyperextension of head and neck, allowing the fetal face to descend into the maternal pelvis first

False labor: regular or irregular uterine contractions that are strong enough to be interpreted as real labor; however, they do not dilate the cervix

Female condom: thin, flexible, polyurethane contraceptive sheath placed inside the vagina to block sperm from entering the cervix

Fern test: procedure to determine the presence of amniotic fluid

Fertility awareness methods: natural family planning based on tracking the woman's ovulatory cycle; requires careful record keeping and sexual abstinence during the fertile part of the month

Fertility rate: number of annual births per 1,000 in women aged 15 to 44

Fertilization: the uniting of sperm with the outer layer of the female ovum that begins the development of a human embryo

Fetal acoustic stimulation test: process used to accelerate the fetal heart rate through use of a speaker, bell, or artificial larynx

Fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS): various fetal physical deformities and cognitive disabilities resulting from excessive alcohol consumption by the mother during pregnancy

Fetal attitude: relationship of fetal body parts to one another, characterized by normal flexion of the arms onto the chest and the legs onto the abdomen

Fetal circulation: path of fetal blood circulation

Fetal distress: problem involving the fetal heart rate or activity in response to the intrauterine environment

Fetal fibronectin testing: screening process used to predict preterm labor

Fetal heart rate (FHR): number of fetal heartbeats per minute; normal range is 110 to 160

Fetal lie: relationship of the fetal spine to the maternal spine; designated as longitudinal or transverse

Fetal movement counting: daily maternal record of fetal movements and activity within a set time period

Fetal position: presenting fetal part in relation to the left, right, front, or back of the maternal pelvis

Fetal presentation: fetal part that first enters the maternal pelvis; known as a cephalic, shoulder, or breech presentation

Fetus: unborn child from about 8 weeks of gestation until birth

Fibroadenoma: painless breast tumor or solid mass

Fibrocystic changes: age-related hormonal changes that commonly include breast tissue thickening and cyst formation

Fibroid tumor: benign tumor growing within the myometrium that can protrude into the uterine cavity and bulge through the outer uterine layer

First stage of labor: period that begins with regular uterine contractions and ends with complete dilation and effacement of the cervix; divided into latent, active, and transition phases

Flexion: position in which the fetal head is bent with chin on chest when resistance is met at the pelvic inlet and floor

Follicle-stimulating hormone: hormone produced by the anterior pituitary during the first half of the menstrual cycle; stimulates the ovary to prepare a mature ovum for release

Follicular phase: ovarian cycle phase that occurs when a follicle becomes mature and is prepared for ovulation

Fontanel: fetal membrane-filled area of strong, soft, connective tissue between the cranial bones of the skull that allows molding of the head during birth

Foramen ovale: opening between the right and left atria of the fetal heart

Forceps: obstetric instruments sometimes used on the presenting part of the fetus to aid in childbirth

Forth stage of labor: period that occurs during the first 2 to 4 hours after delivery of the placenta

Frequency: time from the beginning of one contraction to the beginning of the next

Fundus: upper section of the uterus between the fallopian tubes

G

Gavage feeding: nourishment supplied through a tube inserted into the nose or mouth and emptying into the stomach

Genetic counseling: information discussed with clients and families concerning genes and heredity

Genetic disorder: inherited gene defect passed from one generation to its offspring

Gestational diabetes: diabetes occurring with the onset of pregnancy or first diagnosed during pregnancy

Gestational trophoblastic disease: a malignant or benign (hydatidiform mole) disorder

Gonadotropin-releasing hormone (GnRH): neurohormone secreted by the hypothalamus that stimulates the pituitary to release prolactin and other hormones

Goodell's sign: softening of the cervix during the second month of pregnancy that usually indicates pregnancy

Graafian follicle: fully ripe ovum that secretes estrogen

Gravida: any pregnancy, regardless of outcome

Gravidity: state of pregnancy and number of times pregnant

Gynecoid pelvis: characteristic female pelvis with oval inlet slightly wider than it is high

H

Hegar's sign: softening and widening of the isthmus of the uterus; usually occurs in the second or third month of pregnancy and is detectable by palpitation

HELLP syndrome: changes associated with severe preeclampsia, including elevated liver enzyme levels, hemolysis, and a low platelet count

Hemolytic disease of the newborn: condition in which maternal antibodies cross the placenta and destroy fetal red blood cells due to isoimmunization; examples are ABO and Rh incompatibility, or inadequate vitamin K, leading to a lack of clotting factors and risk of hemorrhage

Hormone replacement therapy (HRT): supplemental use of hormones such as estrogen and progestin to ease menopausal symptoms

Human chorionic gonadotropin (hCG): hormone produced by the chorionic villi and secreted by the corpus luteum of the ovary after conception; detectable in the urine of pregnant women

Human immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV): a retrovirus that causes severe inability of the body to fight infection; leads to AIDS

Human placental lactogen: hormone produced by the syncytiotrophoblast cell around 3 weeks of ovulation; promotes lipolysis to increase free fatty acids during maternal metabolism; detectable in maternal serum around the first month after fertilization

Hydramnios: excess of amniotic fluid often found in pregnant diabetics; may occur even without fetal problems

Hydrocele: accumulated serous fluid in the scrotum

Hydrocephalus: excessive cerebrospinal fluid circulating in the cerebral ventricles, resulting in enlarged fetal head size

Hyperbilirubinemia: abnormally high level of bilirubin in the blood

Hyperemesis gravidarum: severe and excessive vomiting during pregnancy that may begin in the first trimester of pregnancy; can lead to dehydration and starvation

Hyperglycemia: abnormally high blood glucose level

Hypertonic contractions: uterine resting contractions of elevated strength or intensity, or occurring more than five times within 10 minutes

Hypertonic labor: condition characterized by a poor resting rate of contractions and contractions occurring too frequently during labor

Hypocalcemia: abnormally low calcium level in the blood

Hypoglycemia: abnormally low blood glucose level

Hypospadias: congenital abnormality of the penis in which the urethral meatus is on the ventral area or the shaft rather than at the end

Hypothermia: human body temperature of 97°F (37 °C) or less

Hypotonic labor: uterine contractions of insufficient intensity, frequency, or duration during labor

I

Implantation: embedding of the blastocyst into the endometrium, usually 7 to 9 days after fertilization

Infant mortality rate: annual number of infant deaths under age 1 per 1,000 live births of an identified population

Infant of a diabetic mother: at-risk infant born to a diabetic mother

Infertility: inability to conceive or produce viable offspring after regular unprotected intercourse for at least 1 year

Intensity: strength of a uterine contraction at its peak

Internal os: area of the cervix opening into the uterus that divides the cervical canal from the uterine cavity

Intrapartum: time beginning at true labor and lasting birth, until expulsion of the placenta

Intrauterine growth restriction (IUGR): fetal growth below the 10th percentile in terms of weight, length, or head circumference based on standardized gestational rates; may be due to many causes, including deficient nutrient supply, congenital malformation, or intrauterine infection

Intrauterine pressure catheter: tube placed through the cervix to monitor uterine pressure during contractions or to add warm saline to the intrauterine fluid if indicated

Intraventricular hemorrhage: bleeding into cerebral ventricles; common in preterm infants

Inversion of the uterus: condition in which the uterus turns inside out, resulting in serious hemorrhage and shock

Involution: return of the uterus to prepregnancy size and function after childbirth

J

Jaundice: yellow color of a newborn's skin, mucous membranes, and sclera caused by accumulated bilirubin

K

Kangaroo care: skin-to-skin contact between the parent and the newborn

Karyotype: set of an individual's chromosomes arranged in numeric order to assess genetic alterations

Kegel exercises: internal exercises that tighten and strengthen the perineal floor muscles

Kernicterus: a condition resulting from the deposit of excessive unconjugated bilirubin in the brain tissue; may result in impaired neurologic function or death

L

LaLeche League: an international organization that promotes breastfeeding through education and support to breastfeeding mothers

Labor induction: stimulating uterine contractions by physically rupturing the membranes or using medications

Labor: involuntary uterine contractions in which the fetus and placenta are expelled from the uterus to the external world

Laceration: a tear in the perineum or birth canal that occurs during childbirth

Lamaze childbirth: a psychoprophylactic method of childbirth

Lanugo: fine, downy hair on the fetus that develops after the fourth month of gestation

Large for gestational age (LGA): an infant whose birthweight exceeds the 90th percentile for gestational age on a growth chart; typically the weight exceeds 9 lb

Latching-on: proper position for the infant to attach to the breast during breastfeeding

Late-onset deceleration: slowing of the fetal heart rate that begins at the peak of a contraction and returns to baseline at the end of the contraction; caused by uteroplacental insufficiency and potentially inadequate oxygenation of the fetus

Latent phase: labor phase that begins with the onset of true labor and ends with cervical dilatation of 3 cm

Lecithin-sphingomyelin (L/S) ratio: amniotic fluid ratio of lecithin to sphingomyelin that changes during gestation; used to assess fetal lung maturity; an L/S ratio of 2:1 or greater indicates mature lungs and a low risk of respiratory distress syndrome if born at that time

Leopold's maneuvers: series of abdominal palpitation methods to determine presentation, position, lie, and engagement of the fetus

Let-down reflex: breast milk ejection reflex caused by emotional response to the infant or from stimulation of the breast nipple

Letting-go phase: adjustment to the maternal role

Lightening: downward movement of the fetus and uterus into the pelvic cavity

Linea nigra: a dark line of pigment sometimes appearing along the symphysis pubis during later months of pregnancy

LNMP: last normal menstrual period

Lochia alba: creamy white vaginal discharge that occurs after lochia serosa starting from 10 days postpartum to about 21 days postpartum

Lochia rubra: blood-tinged vaginal discharge that occurs for 2 to 4 days postpartum

Lochia serosa: pink, serous, vaginal discharge following lochia rubra that occurs from about 3 days postpartum to about 10 days postpartum

Lochia: normal vaginal discharge of uterine blood, mucus, and tissue after childbirth

Long-term variability: large rhythmic wave variations of the fetal heart rate occurring 2 to 6 times per minute as tracked with a monitor

Low birthweight (LBW): neonate birthweight of 2,500 g or less

Low-lying placenta: condition of an undetermined location of the placenta in relation to the cervical os, or apparent placenta previa occurring prior to the third trimester

Luteal phase: part of the ovarian cycle

Luteinizing hormone (LH): hormone secreted from the anterior pituitary to stimulate ovulation

M

Macrosomia: large newborn weighing more than 4 kg (8 lb 13 oz), or a newborn falling above the 90th percentile for gestational age and birthweight

Malposition: fetal position other than occiput anterior

Malpresentation: abnormal presenting part of the fetus into the birth canal; presentation other than the normal completely flexed head

Mastitis: breast inflammation caused by infection, usually in the milk duct

Maternal mortality rate: number of maternal deaths from any reproductive cause per 100,000 live births

Maternal role attainment: process of learning and applying maternal behaviors to gain a comfortable identity as a mother

Maternal serum alpha-fetoprotein: test of maternal blood at 16 to 22 weeks' gestation for the presence of alpha-fetoprotein to screen for neural tube disorders and genetic trisomies

Meconium aspiration syndrome: newborn respiratory distress caused when the fetus breathes meconium in the amniotic fluid into the lungs or trachea

Meconium: fecal matter present in the large intestine and passed as first the stools of newborn

Menarche: initiation of menstruation

Menopause: permanent cessation of menses for 12 consecutive months

Menorrhagia: profuse or excessive menstrual flow

Menses: vaginal bleeding that occurs approximately every 28 days in nonpregnant females in which the uterine lining is discharged

Metrorrhagia: menstrual periods that occur at irregular intervals

Milia: small, white papules appearing on the newborn's face and upper torso; caused by unopened or plugged

sebaceous glands; normally disappear without treatment in a few weeks

Mittelschmerz: abdominal pain at the time of ovulation

Molding: overlapping capability of the fetal cranial bones to allow shape and size changes of the head so that it can pass through the maternal pelvis during labor

Mongolian spots: irregular dark coloration of no medical significance appearing on the lower back or buttocks of the newborn; may last until age 2

Monozygotic: originating from one zygote; identical twins

Morbidity rate: ratio of the number of cases of a given illness, disease, abnormal human quality, or condition to a given population

Mortality rate: ratio of the number of deaths from various causes to a given population

Morula: solid cell mass formed by the fertilized ovum in very early development

Mottling: temporary skin discoloration on irregular areas of the infant's body that appears as a blue or red blood vessel framework; found in combination with chills, hypoxia, or poor perfusion

Multipara: a woman having two or more pregnancies with viable fetuses of 20 weeks' gestation or more in each pregnancy

Multiple gestation: having more than one fetus in the uterus during the same pregnancy

Mutation: sudden genetic change that occurs in an individual and continues to occur in the offspring

N

Nagele's rule: a method for estimating the delivery date by determining the first day of the last menstrual period, subtracting 3 months, and adding 7 days

Necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC): acquired acute gastrointestinal disease that can be life-threatening to a newborn

Neonatal abstinence syndrome: newborn withdrawal symptoms resulting from the use of narcotics by the mother during fetal development; symptoms may include vomiting, irritability, sneezing, diarrhea, and seizures

Neonatal death: infant death at any gestational age within the first 28 days of life

Neonate: infant in the first 28 days of life

Neutral thermal environment: external conditions that sustain normal internal body temperature with minimal oxygen consumption and metabolism

Nitrazine test: indicates the presence of amniotic fluid based on alkaline content

Nonstress test: assessment of fetal heart rate in response to natural or stimulated fetal movement

O

Obstetrical conjugate: anteroposterior diameter of the pelvic inlet

Oligohydramnios: less-than-normal amount of amniotic fluid in the third trimester; may indicate a fetal urinary tract problem

Ophthalmia neonatorum: newborn eye infection usually caused by gonococci

Orgasmic phase: phase of the human sexual arousal and response process experienced as a release of intense sexual tension

Ortolani maneuver: manual procedure used to diagnose developmental dysplasia of the hip

Osteoporosis: progressively decreased bone mass that results in weak and brittle bones; common in postmenopausal women; associated with lower estrogen and androgen levels

Ovulation: normal release of a mature, unfertilized ovum by the ovary approximately 14 days before the beginning of the menstrual period

Oxytocin: hormone produced by the posterior pituitary that stimulates uterine contractions and the release of milk into the lactiferous ducts

P

Papanicolaou (Pap) smear: procedure to detect cervical cancer

Para: number of live births or stillbirths in a woman following 28 weeks' gestation

Parity: number of past pregnancies that have reached viability

Partial previa: category of placenta previa in which the cervical os is not completely covered by the placenta

Patent ductus arteriosus (PDA): newborn condition in which the ductus arteriosus does not close spontaneously after the first 24 hours of life

Pathologic jaundice: newborn condition characterized by an excessive breakdown of red blood cells, resulting from hematologic incompatibility

Pelvic inflammatory disease (PID): infection of the fallopian tubes, uterus, or ovaries due to vaginal bacteria; may cause pelvic abscess

Pelvic inlet: upper border of the true pelvis and entrance to the first of three pelvic planes through which the fetal head passes during delivery

Pelvic outlet: lower border of the true pelvis and opening of the third pelvic plane through which the fetal head passes during delivery

Pelvic relaxation: decline of muscle support in the pelvic region

Percutaneous umbilical blood sampling (PUB): an evaluation technique involving the direct aspiration of fetal blood from the umbilical cord in the uterus by a needle inserted through the mother's abdominal wall

Perimenopause: phase prior to menopause during which menstrual periods begin to cease

Perineum: area between the vagina and anus in women, or between the scrotum and anus in men

Phototherapy: treatment of newborn jaundice by exposure to a special ultraviolet light

Physiologic anemia of pregnancy: increased plasma volume disproportionate to red blood cells during pregnancy; results in subnormal hemoglobin and hematocrit levels

Physiologic jaundice: harmless normal breakdown and reduction of red blood cells occurring between 2 to 3 days after birth and resolving in 7 to 10 days

Pica: ingestion during pregnancy of non-food substances, such as clay, laundry starch, or ice

Placenta previa: abnormal implantation of the placenta in the lower uterus near or covering the cervical os

Plethora: red color of skin associated with hyperoxia, overheating, or polycythemia

Polycystic ovary syndrome: endocrine disorder of the ovary characterized by the failure to release an ovum for extended periods; due to excess androgens in the blood and cysts in the ovaries

Polycythemia: excessive red blood cells in the circulation

Polydactyly: development of extra digits on hands or feet

Postpartal hemorrhage: loss of more than 500 mL of blood from the birth canal within the first 24 hours of delivery ("early") or after the first 24 hours ("late")

Postpartum blues: maternal feelings of being "out of sorts" during first few days after giving birth

Postpartum depression: maternal feelings of severe depression during the first year after giving birth, with increased occurrence prior to resumed menses

Postpartum psychosis: severe maternal psychiatric condition occurring within first few months after childbirth

Postterm infant: any newborn assessed to be of more than 42 weeks' gestation

Postterm pregnancy: pregnancy that continues beyond 42 weeks of gestation

Precipitous birth: rapid labor and birth process, usually less than 3 hours in duration

Preconception care: medical information and counseling provided to a woman before she becomes pregnant; can promote optimal outcomes for the mother and infant

Pre-eclampsia: syndrome of pregnancy characterized by proteinuria, hypertension, and edema

Premature rupture of membranes (PROM): spontaneous or artificial tearing of the amniotic membranes prior to labor

Prematurity: childbirth prior to the end of 37 weeks' gestation

Premenstrual syndrome (PMS): emotional, behavioral, or physical symptoms that some women experience during the luteal phase of the menstrual cycle

Presenting part: fetal part closest to the internal os of the cervix

Preterm birth: childbirth before 37 weeks of gestation

Preterm infant: birth of an infant determined to be less than 37 weeks' gestational age

Preterm labor: any true labor occurring during 20 and 38 completed weeks of gestation

Preterm premature rupture of membranes (PPROM): spontaneous or artificial tearing of the amniotic membranes prior to labor, occurring before 37 completed weeks of gestation

Primigravida: woman in her first pregnancy

Primipara: woman in her first pregnancy who has given birth past 20 weeks of gestation

Progesterone: hormone produced by the corpus luteum of the ovary and the adrenal cortex to prepare the uterus for implantation of the fertilized ovum

Prolactin: hormone secreted by the pituitary gland that triggers and sustains milk production in response to tactile breast stimulation

Proliferative phase: time in the menstrual cycle when the uterine lining becomes prepared for reception and implantation of the fertilized ovum

Prostaglandins: hormones synthesized by many body cells that affect uterine smooth muscle, vasodilatation, and constriction

Q

Quickening: mother's experience of first fetal movements, usually between 17 and 20 weeks' gestation

R

Radiation: transfer and loss of human body heat to cooler objects and surfaces not in direct contact

Reactive nonstress test: detection of two or more fetal heart rate changes of 15 beats or more per minute for 15 seconds or more each within a 10-minute period

Recovery stage: first 4 hours after delivery of the placenta in the fourth stage of labor

Reference daily intakes (RDIs): food content standards for vitamins and minerals

Regional anesthesia: injection of an anesthetic affecting nerve tissue by blocking neural impulses in order to obtain the loss of sensation to an area of the body

Respiratory distress syndrome (RDS): pulmonary membrane disease that causes breathing difficulty and occurs most often in preterm neonates; also known as hyaline membrane disease

Resting tone: level of uterine firmness between contractions during labor

Resuscitation: emergency procedure involving control of the airway opening, positive-pressure ventilation, chest compressions, medication, and body temperature

Retinopathy of prematurity (ROP): fibrotic disease in the blood vessels of the retina in newborns; can cause blindness

Rh incompatibility: hemolytic disease resulting from incompatibility of Rh factors of maternal and fetal blood that causes an antigen-antibody reaction; also known as isoimmunization

RhoGAM: anti-Rh (D) gamma globulin given to an Rh-negative mother after the birth of an Rh-positive child to prevent development of permanent active immunity to the Rh antigen

Rooting reflex: an infant's natural response of turning the head toward a physical stimulus of the cheek or mouth area

Rugae: transverse mucous membrane ridges lining the vagina that expand to accommodate descent of the fetal head during birth

S

Screening: a test or examination to detect a bodily condition, disorder, or disease warranting medical investigation

Second stage of labor: period from the time the cervix is completely dilated and effaced until the birth of the fetus

Secretory phase: period during the menstrual cycle following ovulation and preceding menstruation

Semen: white fluid containing sperm and their nutrient secretions ejaculated from the erect penis during orgasm

Seminiferous tubules: structures that carry sperm from the testes

Sepsis: systemic infection in the blood due to virus, parasites, or bacteria

Sexually transmitted infection (STI): disease transmitted through unprotected sexual contact with an infected individual

Short-term variability: normal changes detected between successive fetal heartbeats

Shoulder dystocia: condition during labor in which the fetal shoulder cannot freely pass beneath the maternal symphysis pubis due to either a large fetus or a small maternal pelvis

Small for gestational age (SGA): infant whose birthweight is below the 10th percentile for gestational age

Spermatogenesis: process by which mature sperm (spermatozoa) develop from spermatogonia (sperm cells)

Spermicide: chemical contraception that either destroys sperm or neutralizes vaginal secretions to immobilize sperm

Station: relationship between the presenting fetal part and an imaginary line of the pelvic ischial spines

Sterilization: surgical procedure performed on males or females to prevent reproduction

Stress incontinence: involuntary discharge of urine during exercise, sneezing, laughing, or coughing; due to loss of muscle tone at the neck of the urethra

Striae gravidarum: reddish or darkened streaks on the stretched skin of the abdomen, hips, or breasts caused by pregnancy

Subinvolution: failure of the uterus to return to normal size after pregnancy due to prolonged involution from infection, hemorrhage, or retained parts of the placenta

Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS): the death of a healthy, properly cared for infant from unexplained causes

Surfactant: a lipoprotein that stabilizes and lowers the alveolar surface tension of fluids in the lungs, allowing gases to be exchanged in the alveoli

T

Tachycardia: rapid heart rate; in a neonate, above 160 bpm; in an adult, above 100 bpm

Tachypnea: rapid respiratory rate; in a neonate, above 70 respirations/minute

Taking-hold phase: second phase of maternal adjustment, marking maternal readiness for newborn involvement

Taking-in phase: first phase of maternal adjustment, marking maternal need for care, food, and comfort

Teratogen: nongenetic factors or environmental substances that cause physical or functional malformations of the embryo and fetus

Term infant: newborn determined by examination to be 37 to 42 weeks' gestational age

Testes: male gonads; two oval organs in the scrotum in which sperm and testosterone are produced

Testosterone: androgen (male) hormone produced in the testes, adrenal cortex, and ovary; responsible for development of secondary male characteristics

Thelarche: beginning breast development of glandular tissue behind the nipples; occurs at puberty

Thermoregulation: control of body heat production and loss through physiologic changes activated by the hypothalamus

Third stage of labor: period of labor from birth until the expulsion of the placenta

Thrush: fungal infection caused by *Candida albicans*, most common in infants; marked by white plaque patches in the mouth and on the tongue

TORCH: acronym for a pregnancy syndrome of infections (toxoplasmosis, rubella, cytomegalovirus, and herpesvirus or hepatitis); linked to potentially severe fetal or neonatal problems

Transient tachypnea of the newborn: fetal respiratory disorder characterized by mild cyanosis and increased respiratory rate, possibly caused by delayed resorption of lung fluid

Transition: third phase of the first stage of labor, in which dilation of the cervix increases from 8 to 10 cm

Transvaginal ultrasound: procedure used to monitor early pregnancy, to treat women undergoing induction cycles, and to retrieve oocytes for in vitro fertilization

Transverse lie: crosswise or horizontally positioned fetus

Trimester: one third of a normal pregnancy; pregnancy is divided into three trimesters of 3 months each

Trisomy: abnormal presence of an extra, or third, homologous chromosome rather than the normal two, resulting in 47 chromosomes per cell; Down syndrome is the most common human manifestation of this condition

True labor: regular contraction and relaxation intervals of the uterus with progressive shortening, thinning, and dilation of the cervix

Tubal ligation: method of female sterilization that involves surgical severing and tying of the fallopian tubes

U

Ultrasonography: use of high-frequency (>20,000 Hz) sound waves directed into the maternal abdomen to reflect tissue densities and outlines for visualization and diagnosis of the fetus, gestational structures, bones, and fluids

Umbilical cord compression: in utero pressure on the umbilical cord by the fetus or the uterine wall that decreases blood circulation and oxygenation of the fetus

Umbilical cord prolapse: condition in which the umbilical cord precedes the presenting fetal part through the cervix and birth canal

Urge incontinence: involuntary loss of urine associated with a sudden, strong desire to urinate

Uterine atony: inability of uterine muscle to contract after childbirth

Uterine rupture: uterine wall separation that could allow penetration of fetal parts into the abdomen

Uteroplacental insufficiency: decrease in placental function of exchange of gases, wastes, and nutrients, leading to fetal hypoxia and acidosis; evidenced by late fetal heart rate decelerations

V

Vacuum extraction: use of a vacuum suction cup applied to the fetal head to assist in birth

Vaginal birth after cesarean (VBAC): vaginal birth of an infant by a woman who has had at least one previous cesarean birth

Vaginal ring: contraceptive device used to deliver steroids through the vaginal mucosa

Variable deceleration: periodic slowing of fetal heart rate due to umbilical cord compression, and possibly unrelated to normal uterine contractions

Varicocele: varicose veins in the spermatic cord

Vasectomy: male sterilization procedure that involves removing a section of the vas deferens

Vernix caseosa: fatty, white, cheese-like substance secreted by fetal sebaceous glands and epidermal cells that covers and protects fetal skin from abrasions in utero

Vertex: crown or top of the fetal head

Vertical transmission: passing of an infection to the fetus or neonate by the mother during pregnancy, delivery, or breastfeeding

Very low birthweight: birthweight of less than 1,500 g

W

Weaning: transition from breast- or bottle-feeding to a cup

