

UNIT 2: OBSTETRICS

SECTION B: ABNORMAL OBSTETRICS

Educational Topic 30: Postterm Pregnancy

Rationale: Perinatal morbidity and mortality increase significantly in a prolonged pregnancy. Prevention of complications associated with postterm pregnancy is one of the goals of antepartum and intrapartum management.

Intended Learning Outcomes:

A student should be able to:

- Identify the normal duration of gestation
- List the complications of prolonged gestation
- Describe the evaluation and evidence-based management options for prolonged gestation

TEACHING CASE

CASE: A 35-year-old, G1P0 woman, presents to your office for a routine prenatal exam. She is 5 days past her due date that was determined by her last menstrual period and a second trimester ultrasound. While reviewing her chart, you note that she has gained 32 pounds during this uncomplicated pregnancy with 1/2 pound weight gain since last week's visit. Her BP is 110/65. She has no glycosuria or proteinuria. The fundal height measures 38 cm and fetal heart tones are auscultated at 120 bpm in the left lower quadrant. The fetus has a cephalic presentation and an estimated weight of 8 lbs.

Just before you go into the room, your nurse pulls you to the side, and tells you, "She has a lot of questions!" Once you walk into the room, the patient expresses her disappointment that she has not had the baby yet. She assumed that she would be having the baby on her due date. She asks you about potential harm to her and the baby from going past her due date, and she would like to know her options.

COMPETENCY-BASED DISCUSSION & KEY TEACHING POINTS:

Competencies addressed:

- Patient Care
- Medical Knowledge
- Systems-Based Practice

1. What would you tell this patient is the normal duration of pregnancy and what is the usual time for the onset of spontaneous labor?
2. What are the risks associated with postterm pregnancy?
3. What are the features of postmaturity syndrome?
4. What management plan would be appropriate for this patient?

REFERENCES

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ACOG Committee Opinion Number 579, Definition of Term Pregnancy, November 2013.