

## **Introduction**

Physiotherapy Touch Clinic in line with some of the activities outlined in The National Road Map for Accelerating the Reduction of Maternal and Newborn Mortality and Morbidity in Botswana aims to 'raise awareness of the community on birth preparedness and on danger signs' through provision of ante natal classes. Provision of ante natal classes is the provision of relevant and accurate information, education and advice; and professionally supportive environment during the pregnancy of a woman to herself and /or partner or support persons to promote safer childbirth.

## **Ante Natal Classes**

Physiotherapy Touch Clinic offers to provide ante natal classes of a cycle of three classes. The main objective is to educate, advice and reassure pregnant women and their partners/support persons. A spirit of self embracement as the miracle of life evolves will be engendered.

## **Class One**

The main topic is the impact of the effects of pregnancy on the woman and coping strategies. Clients are encouraged to attend this class during the earlier months of pregnancy to enhance the appreciation of the changes that ensue with continued pregnancy. A woman can, however, attend at any stage during the pregnancy. The discussions span from conception to childbirth.

## **Class Two**

The main topic is childbirth. This class aims to demystify the fear and over rating of labor pains associated with vaginal delivery. Discussion on caesarian section delivery is also included. If the partner to the pregnant woman is considering being present during childbirth or he is not sure – this is the must attend class for him. This class gives the partner the reality check as to whether this is an environment he can handle. As pregnant women we must acknowledge, accept and respect that some of our partners are not able to handle the birthing environment but they continue to provide us with support and care. Clients are encouraged to attend as early as seven months of pregnancy to help prepare in time those who will have a premature delivery.

## **Class Three**

The main topic is post birth expectations as they relate to the mother and child. Clients are encouraged to attend as early as seven months of pregnancy to help prepare in time those who will have a premature delivery.

Throughout the three classes the common thread is the perineum/pelvic floor muscles/Kegel muscles. During class one relaxation of the perineum is facilitated through education/practice of proper toileting to move bowel. Activation of the perineum is achieved through Kegel exercises. During class two more emphasizes is put on relaxation of the perineum through three different breathing techniques to facilitate vaginal delivery. In class three a greater emphasis is on activating the pelvic floor to regain strength, facilitate

perineal healing and protection of the perineum during increased intra-abdominal pressure activities such as coughing. Women with weak pelvic floor muscles are at risk of incontinence more commonly urinary incontinence.

Classes are offered weekdays and Saturdays.

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