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Postpartum Review and Contraception Counselling

Practical 05 / Communication role-play

Aim

Assess postpartum concerns and use shared decision-making to discuss contraception and puerperal sterilisation.

Principle

Postpartum options depend on timing, breastfeeding, medical eligibility and personal preferences. Permanent contraception requires informed and voluntary decision-making.

Materials and Requirements

- Fictional postpartum record, method display and eligibility guide
- Counselling and follow-up form

Procedure

1. Ask about wellbeing, bleeding, pain, feeding, recovery and the person's pregnancy-spacing preferences. Identify urgent symptoms first.
2. Check postpartum timing, bleeding, pain, fever, feeding and wellbeing, then discuss spacing preferences privately. Escalate concerning physical or mental symptoms before routine counselling.
3. Explain the practical differences between relevant temporary and permanent options, including effectiveness, reversibility, side effects and availability.
4. Ask which qualities matter most, including reversibility, convenience and access. Compare suitable methods in a balanced way, explaining how each is used and common practical concerns.

Continue with step 5 on the next page.

Procedure Continued

Postpartum Review and Contraception Counselling

5. Review breastfeeding, postpartum timing and clinical eligibility using the local guide. Discuss STI prevention where relevant.
6. Use the current local medical eligibility guide with pregnancy timing, breastfeeding and the clinical risks in the case. Verify eligibility and access with the clinician before recording a proposed choice.
7. Explain permanency, potential failure, alternatives and consent requirements for sterilisation. Give time for questions and avoid pressure.
8. Discuss permanent contraception only with informed voluntary consent. Explain intended permanence, possible failure and alternatives, and allow time for questions or deferral.
9. Ask for teach-back and record the patient's choice, uncertainty or request for another discussion. Agree on next contact.
10. Ask the person to explain their choice or undecided options and the next visit. Record an agreed plan for obtaining the method, follow-up, warning symptoms and any outstanding decision.

Precautions

- Respect voluntary choice and confidentiality. Use an interpreter when needed and chosen by the patient.
- Urgently refer concerning postpartum symptoms.

Observations and Interpretation

Postpartum Review and Contraception Counselling

Observations and Record

Item	What to record	What it tells you
Postpartum status	Recovery symptoms, feeding and timing	Identifies review and eligibility needs
Preferences	Spacing goals and option priorities	Supports informed choice
Agreement	Decision, follow-up and pending questions	Records a voluntary plan

Worked Example

A breastfeeding patient wants spacing and asks about permanent contraception but is unsure. The student discusses reversible alternatives and agrees on a follow-up visit.

Result and Interpretation

Document the preference and allow time for the person to consider options. Confirm eligibility and timing through the responsible clinician.

Viva Questions and Answers

Why discuss alternatives before sterilisation?

Understanding temporary and permanent options supports informed consent.

What determines eligibility after delivery?

Timing, breastfeeding, complications and other medical factors affect method choice.

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