

Peripartum cardiomyopathy

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Peripartum cardiomyopathy is rare type of heart disease occurring in late third trimester or puerperal period with very high maternal mortality. The precise aetiology is unknown and it remains a diagnosis by exclusion.

A 22 year old primigravida (MK) with 35 weeks pregnancy was referred to L.T.M.G. Hospital in early labour with severe pregnancy induced hypertension. Patient also had history of dyspnoea and cough for last 2-3 days. On examination, she was minimally febrile, with pulse of 110/minute. Her blood pressure was 150/110 mmHg and she had oedema feet grade II. The fundal height corresponded to 36 weeks period of gestation with good foetal heart sound. Per vaginal examination findings were suggestive of early labour. The examination of respiratory system revealed minimal basal crepitations on both sides. On CVS examination there was no abnormality apart from tachycardia. A probable diagnosis of PIH with respiratory tract infection was made and antihypertensive anti-convulsant therapy with antibiotics was started. Labour was accelerated with oxytocin drip and outlet forceps were applied in second stage to deliver male child of

2.3 kg. The admission delivery interval was 7.4 hours.

On third post-partum day, her dyspnoea and cough increased considerably. She started complaining of chest pain, palpitations and heaviness in chest. She was minimally febrile and had tachycardia (134/min.). She had crepitations all over bilaterally but there was no obvious murmur. The cardiologist's opinion was sought. The ECG showed only sinus tachycardia, but X-ray chest revealed massive cardiomegaly. The diagnosis of peripartum cardiomyopathy with left ventricular failure was made. She was started on metoprolol, lasix and low dose heparin. Her condition improved gradually and was found clinically normal by day 17. The dosage of drugs were tapered gradually and patient was discharged on day 21 on tablet lasix and Mist. KCl.

She followed-up regularly in O.P.D. The X-ray chest done 6 months later showed marked decrease in the size of the heart. Now at 8 months post partum mother is doing well without any medication.