

# Antenatal Breast complications and their management

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**Summary:** The present study was undertaken for detection and management of antenatal breast complications and to bring about successful breast feeding.

A thorough and complete examination was carried out with special emphasis to breast in sitting posture, bending forwards and in recumbent position. Routine investigations, including Haemoglobin, total and differential leucocyte counts, fasting and postprandial blood sugar and complete urine were done.

A total of 400 patients were examined in the antenatal period out of which 83(20.75%) patients having breast complications of interest comprised the cohort for subsequent followup. Cracked nipples were the most common finding in 40 (48.11%) patients followed by retracted nipples in 18(21.69%), Cracked and retracted nipples in 12 (14.45%), galactorrhoea in 6 (7.23%), inverted nipples in 3(3.61%), axillary tail swelling in 3 (3.61%) and axillary tail abscess in 1(1.20%) patients. Maximum patients 72(86.75%) were of 20-30 years age group. Most of the cases were primigravidas viz, 46 (55.42%) and 52(62.65%) of the patients belonged to middle socioeconomic status. The cases mostly belonged to urban area. Sixteen (19.28%) patients were illiterate. A response rate of 87.5% was found to treatment of cracked nipples patients with both cracked and retracted nipples showed 66.67% response rate, Inverted nipples showed no response rate and galactorrhoea, axillary tail abscess and axillary tail swelling showed 100% response rate to treatment. Overall response rate was 79.52% to treatment.

## Introduction

Baby Friendly Hospital has drawn the attention of health personnel towards the promotion of breast feeding. The infrastructure of not only our country, but many countries in different parts of the world have never emphasized on the problems of breast feeding. A lot of breast complications are encountered in the postnatal period when the mothers start breast feeding their child. Many of these complications are present in the antenatal period also. Breast complications can be reduced through antenatal checkups which is not routinely practised because of crowded outpatient departments.

Breast feeding is recognized as the preferred form of infant nutrition as stated by national pediatric, obstetric/gynaecologic and family medicine societies. Obstetricians are a frequent source of contact throughout pregnancy and early child development. This contact gives them multiple opportunities to advocate breast feeding in the prenatal setting, assist with breast feeding initiation and management after delivery, and answer questions regarding maternal and infant progress throughout the duration of breast feeding.

In this study emphasis has been given to common breast complications encountered during antenatal period. Emphasis has been given to antenatal breast examination and attempts have been made to reduce postnatal complications through antenatal checkups. Proper hygiene, care of the nipples and psychological buildup of the patients was done for breast feeding.

## Material and Methods

The present study was conducted in the department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at Swaroop Rani Nehru and Kamala Nehru Memorial Hospital Allahabad. A detailed history was taken regarding age, parity, socio-economic status, dietary history, personal history and past history. All the patients in the antenatal period were counselled regarding early initiation of feeds and their advantages. A thorough and complete examination was then carried out with special emphasis to breast in sitting posture, bending forwards position and in recumbent position. Nipple, areola, any swelling, axillary tail swelling, lymph nodes were examined. Routine investigations including haemoglobin, total and differential leucocyte counts, fasting and postprandial blood sugar and complete urine examination were done.

## Results and Discussion

Out of 400 patients examined in the antenatal period, 83(20.75%) were found to have breast complications of interest which formed the cohort for subsequent followup. Cracked nipples were the most common finding comprising 40(48.19%) of the complications followed by retracted nipples 18(21.69%), cracked and retracted nipples 12(14.45%), galactorrhoea 6(7.23%), inverted nipple 3(3.61%), axillary tail mass 3(3.61%) and axillary tail abscess 1(1.20%) cases. Eastham and his colleagues (1976) provided useful information on the educational approaches needed to allow mothers to reach the right decision regarding breast feeding their infants. According to them newborn babies often need frequent body contact and always require abundant opportunities to suckle. Their mothers need support and encouragement. Winikoff and Baer (1980) found that many women have already decided on the method of infant feeding before pregnancy, information given during obstetric care is much more significant than any pediatric pleading after birth.

Maximum patients 72(86.75%) were of 20-30 years age group with mean age of  $24.49 \pm 1.1$  years. Most of the cases 46(55.42%) were primigravidae.

Fifty two (62.25%) patients belonged to middle socioeconomic status. The cases mostly belonged to urban area. Sixteen (33.33%) patients were illiterate. Salih et al (1993) studied the factors that influenced breast feeding in urban and rural communities in 6 states. Urban mothers were represented by 3 (high, middle and poor) socioeconomic classes. Maximum complications 46 (55.42%) were found in primigravidas.

Patients with antenatal breast complication were followed

into the postnatal period to find out the effect of treatment and early detection of complications. Forty patients with cracked nipple were asked to apply allantoin cream locally and 35 cases responded to treatment and a response rate of 87.5% was found. Twelve patients with both cracked and retracted nipple were asked to apply allantoin cream and to perform nipple elevating exercises and a response rate of 9(75%) was found to treatment. Eighteen patients with retracted nipple were asked to perform nipple elevating exercises and 12 cases responded to treatment with a response rate of 66.7%. Three patients with inverted nipples were asked to perform nipple elevating exercises and a response rate of 0% was found to treatment. Six patients with galactorrhoea were given high doses of hydroxyprogesterone caproate and all cases responded to treatment. Incision and drainage was done in 1 case of axillary tail abscess and excision was done in 3 cases of axillary tail swelling and both showed a response rate of 100% each. Overall response rate was 79.52%

## Conclusion

Thus we conclude that postnatal breast complications like cracked and retracted nipple, retracted nipple, galactorrhoea, axillary tail swelling and axillary tail abscess can be reduced if thorough breast examination is done during antenatal checkup and proper management in the antenatal period is done.

## Bibliography

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