

Legal Issues of Pregnancy and Abortion

**Presented
By**

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Medico-Legal Aspect of Pregnancy

1. In cases of rape.
2. In cases of divorce .
3. Alleged pregnancy for inheritance.
4. Alleged pregnancy for delay death by execution.
5. Illegitimate pregnancy of married women.
6. Alleged criminal abortion.
7. Alleged infanticide.

Diagnosis of Pregnancy

Probable Signs of Pregnancy:

- **Breast signs** (enlarged, dark areola, Montgomery follicles, colostrum)
- (It is insignificant in multigravida)
- **Abdominal wall signs** (enlarged abdomen, linea nigra “6-8 weeks”, striae gravidarum “6-7th month”)
- **Vulva signs** (dark pigmented mucosa)
- **Vaginal signs** (warm, excess mucus, dark violet colour, pulsation)
- **Cervical signs** (soft, excessive secretion, velvety sensation)
- **Uterine signs** (enlarged uterus)

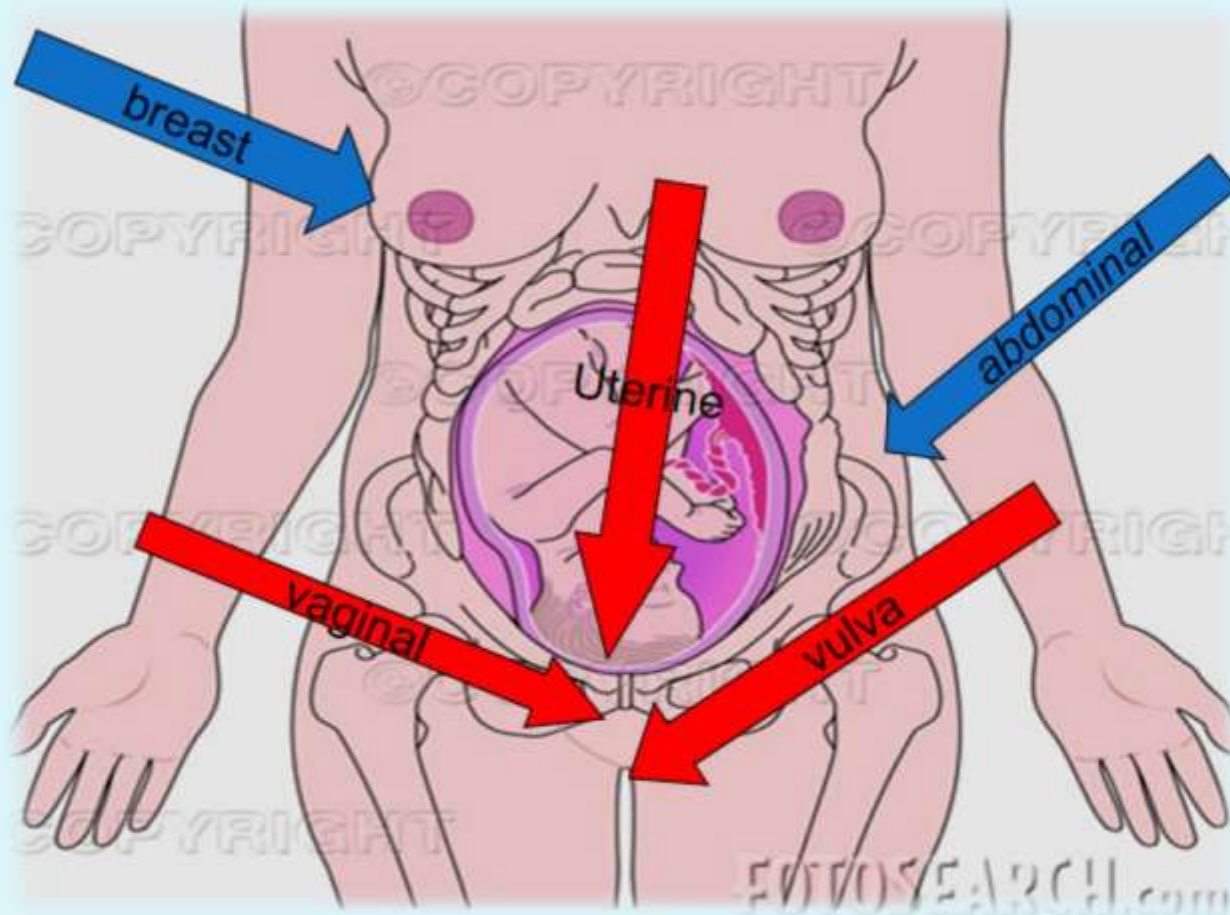
The fundus of Uterus

12th week - At symphysis pubis

20th week- At umbilicus

32th week- At xiphoid process

40th week- Midway between umbilicus and xiphoid process



Sure Signs of Pregnancy

1. Inspection of fetal movements after the 4th month.
2. Palpation of fetal parts after the 4th month.
3. Auscultation of the fetal heart sounds after the 4th month.
4. Ultrasound of the fetus after the 4th - 5th month .
5. Pregnancy test “urine and blood” (+ ve after around 10 days from missed period)

Estimation of gestational period in livings by:-

- 1- Palpation of fundus level.
- 2- Ultrasound.

Diagnosis of Pregnancy in The Dead

By autopsy , We can examine the following :-

- Enlarged uterus
- Weight of uterus
- Length of uterus
- Content of uterus
- Age of contained fetus
- Detection of chorionic cells
- in early pregnancy
- by microscopical examination



Estimation of Gestational Period in Dead

1-Weight of uterus

2-Length of uterus

Gestational period (Months)	Length of uterus (inches)
4	6
5	7
6	9
7	10
8	12
9	13

3- Hess formula

- length Before the 5th month = $(\text{month})^2$

Ex. length of fetus in centimeters = $(4M)^2 = 16\text{cm}$

- After 5th month = $\text{month} \times 5$

Ex. length of fetus in centimeters = $(7M) \times 5 = 35\text{ cm}$

Delivery

Medico-legal Aspect of Delivery :-

1. Inheritance
2. Infanticide
3. interchange of infants

Signs of Recent Delivery

- 1- **General signs** (exhaustion, pallor, rapid weak pulse)
- 2- **Breast** (firm, full, colostrum)
- 3- **Abdominal wall** (lax, wrinkled, linea albicans)
- 4- **External genitalia** (vulval bruises, tears, swelling of labia, recent rupture of fourchette)
- 5- **Lochia** (bloody – yellow- disappearance at 10-12 days)
- 6- **External cervical os** (soft, patulous, lacerations)
- 7- **Ovaries** (large corpus luteum)
- 8- **Uterus**

Immediately after delivery

Fundus is two fingers above umbilicus

One week after delivery

Fundus is midway between umbilicus and symphysis pubis

Six weeks after delivery , uterus regains its original size

Signs of Remote Delivery in Living

- **Breast**

Soft, pendulous, enlarged nipples, dark areola

- **Abdominal wall**

Lax abdominal wall with linea albicantes

- **Perineum**

Scars of old perineal tears

- **Vagina**

Smooth, dilated, patulous

- **Cervix**

External cervical os is transverse “slit-shaped” , old lacerations

Signs of Delivery in The Dead

- **Length of uterus** is more than 3 inches (body is double cervix)
- **Cavity of uterus** is globular shape , triangular in nullipara
- **Mucosa of uterus** .Cervical mucosa is smooth, raised bloody tinged area in placental site till 6 months after delivery , later on it is endarteritis obliterans.

Immediately after delivery

Uterus is 1kg, 25 cm, diameter of placental site is 10 cm

One week after delivery

Uterus is 500 gm, 12 cm, diameter of placental site is 5 cm

Two weeks after delivery

Uterus is 375 gm, 10 cm, diameter of placental site is 4 cm

Six weeks after delivery

Uterus is 100 gm, 8 cm, diameter of placental site is 2 cm

Abortion

Definition

- Detachment or expulsion of the contents of gravid uterus at any time before the full term.

Medico-legal Aspect of Abortion

1. Alleged abortion after a fight
2. Abortion due to malpractice.
3. Conceal abortion after being charged with it

Types of Abortion

1-Spontaneous abortion

Causes

- ❑ Diseases of the mother (General- Local)
- ❑ Diseases of the fetus

2-Induced abortion

A- Therapeutic (legal) abortion

Causes

- ❑ Diseases of the mother
- ❑ Diseases of pregnancy

B- Criminal (illegal) abortion

Methods of Therapeutic Abortion Induction

1. Dilatation of the cervix of the uterus and curettage
2. Suction aspiration

Precautions of Therapeutic Abortion:

1. Consultation of two specialists
2. A written consent from the woman and from her husband.
3. Should be done in hospital.
4. It must be done by specialist.
5. The cases must be recorded in the hospital files.

Methods of Criminal Abortion Induction

1- **General violence**

2- **Local violence**

Methods by non professional

Methods by professional (medical person)

3- **Abortifacient drugs**



Dangers of Abortion

1. Neurogenic shock
2. Hemorrhage
3. Air embolism
4. Acute poisoning
5. Sepsis

Diagnosis of Abortion

In The Living :-

1. Patient 's consent
2. Signs of pregnancy
3. Signs of general violence
4. Signs of local violence
5. Laboratory investigations
6. Products of abortion

Diagnosis of Abortion

In The Dead :-

1. Abdomen (peritonitis)
2. Intestine
3. Vagina
4. Cervix
5. Uterus

Thank you