Normal birth: third and fourth stage

### Third stage

**From birth of baby to birth of placenta/membranes**

**Management**

- **Modified active**: recommend for all births
  - Oxytocin 10 IU IM after birth of baby
  - Wait at least 1 minute after birth or for cord pulsation to cease and then clamp and cut cord
  - Controlled cord traction and uterine guarding after signs of separation
  - Considered prolonged after 30 minutes
- **Physiological**
  - Suitable for well women without risk factors
  - Placenta birthed by maternal effort/gravity
  - Oxytocin not administered
  - Clamp cord after pulsation ceased
  - No controlled cord traction
  - Considered prolonged after 60 minutes
- **If concern with cord integrity, newborn condition, or FHR:**
  - Clamp and cut the cord

**Ongoing care**

- Encourage upright maternal position
- Ensure bladder empty
- Maintain calm, warm and relaxed environment
- Support privacy and reduce interruptions
- Encourage to focus on physiological process
- Observe general physical condition

### Fourth stage

**First 6 hours after birth of placenta/membranes**

**Supportive care**

- Encourage mother to eat, drink and rest
- Discuss and offer pain relief (if indicated)
- Consider personal hygiene needs
- Assess emotional and psychological wellbeing
- If Rh D negative blood group, review indications for Rh D immunoglobulin

**Assessment (for the first two hours)**

After frequency of observations/assessment as indicated:

- Temperature: within the first hour
- Pulse, RR, BP: after birth of the placenta
- Fundus and lochia: after birth of the placenta, then every 15–30 minutes
- Perineum: with first maternal observations
- Pain and discomfort
- Urine output: monitor voiding postpartum
- Examine placenta, membranes and cord
- Support early discharge, as clinically appropriate

### Baby

**Initial assessment**

- Breathing, HR, colour, reflex irritability, tone,
  - Apgar score at 1 and 5 minutes
- Initial brief newborn examination

**Supportive care**

- Maintain warmth with:
  - Clear visibility and optimal airway position
  - Adequate lighting for observation of colour

**Ongoing assessment**

- Respiratory rate, colour, positioning for patent airway every 15 minutes for first 2 hours
- Temperature and HR within 1 hour of birth

**Non-urgent care (after first feed)**

- Weight, length and head circumference
- Recommend phytomenadione (vitamin K/Konakion®) 1 mg IM
- Offer Hepatitis B vaccine