

Author: B.S. Garg

Case Study: Treating Complications in Pregnancy (#2)

Amrapali's Story

Amrapali was 22 years old and lived with her husband and in-laws in a small village. She was registered at a health facility and went regularly for her antenatal check-ups. Her pregnancy proceeded smoothly until one night, during her ninth month, she developed labor pains. Though there was a hospital only 5 km away, her husband took her to a small health clinic, located more than 8 km away, because he feared he would not be able to meet the expenses at the hospital.

Amrapali gave birth that night, but immediately after delivery she developed difficulty breathing. The doctor found that she had very high blood pressure. Soon she developed convulsions, and as her condition worsened, the doctors referred her to the hospital. After being admitted to the hospital, Amrapali continued to have convulsions, to the point that her arms and legs had to be tied to the bed. Her blood pressure continued to rise. The next morning she could not breathe properly, and she died.

Questions for Students

What were the social, economic, and medical factors that contributed to Amrapali's death? What should have been done differently in this case?

Tutor's Notes

What went wrong?

- Risk factor (high blood pressure) not detected.
- Delay in reaching the hospital because of the husband's decision
- Delay in referral to the hospital from the small health clinic

Discussion: High blood pressure during pregnancy should be correctly diagnosed and not ignored. Proper antenatal and postnatal care is a must for each pregnancy. Had Amrapali's husband taken her to the hospital without delay, the tragic outcome could have been prevented. Immediate referral from the initial facility where care is sought to a higher facility when needed is essential. Referral should not be delayed till the situation gets out of hand.