

## Parturition and Lactation

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— called gestation period.

Vigorous contraction of the uterus at the end of pregnancy — expulsion or delivery of the foetus.

Process of delivery of the foetus or child birth — Parturition.

Parturition is induced by a complex neuroendocrine mechanism.

The signals for parturition originate from the fully developed foetus & the placenta.  
Induce mild uterine contraction called Foetal ejection reflex.

Oxytocin is released from maternal Pituitary.

Oxytocin acts on the uterine muscles & causes stronger uterine contractions.  
more & more secretion of oxytocin.

The stimulatory reflex between the uterine contraction & oxytocin secretion continues & results expulsion of the baby out of the uterus - Parturition.

Mammary gland undergoes differentiation & starts producing milk towards the end of pregnancy ~~but~~ called Lactation.

The milk produced during the initial few days of lactation called colostrum, which contain several antibodies which develop resistance for the new-born babies.  
Breast-feeding during initial period of infant-growth is necessary for healthy baby.

### 3.7 PARTURITION AND LACTATION

The average duration of human pregnancy is about 9 months which is called the gestation period. Vigorous contraction of the uterus at the end of pregnancy causes expulsion/delivery of the foetus. This process of delivery of the foetus (childbirth) is called **parturition**. Parturition is induced by a complex neuroendocrine mechanism. The signals for parturition originate from the fully developed foetus and the placenta which induce mild uterine contractions called **foetal ejection reflex**. This triggers release of oxytocin from the maternal pituitary. Oxytocin acts on the uterine muscle and causes stronger uterine contractions, which in turn stimulates further secretion of oxytocin. The stimulatory reflex between the uterine contraction and oxytocin secretion continues resulting in stronger and stronger contractions. This leads to expulsion of the baby out of the uterus through the birth canal – parturition. Soon after the infant is delivered, the placenta is also expelled out of the uterus. *What do you think the doctors inject to induce delivery?*

The mammary glands of the female undergo differentiation during pregnancy and starts producing milk towards the end of pregnancy by the process called **lactation**. This helps the mother in feeding the new-born. The milk produced during the initial few days of lactation is called **colostrum** which contains several antibodies absolutely essential to develop resistance for the new-born babies. Breast-feeding during the initial period of infant growth is recommended by doctors for bringing up a healthy baby.