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## Highlighting women's health with evidence-based antenatal, natal and post-natal exercise programs

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**Background & Aim:** The rapidly increasing prevalence of childhood obesity has become a major burden on health worldwide, giving an alarm to healthcare clinicians and researchers. Adipocytes act as an active endocrine organ by releasing a plenty of bioactive mediators (adipokines) that play a vital role in regulating metabolic processes. Apelin is a newly discovered adipokine that is expressed in adipocytes. The present work aimed to study the association between serum apelin and childhood obesity and its related complications as hypertension and hyperglycemia

### Introduction & Aim:

Physiotherapy evolved a lot over the past decades by revealing its significance in various branches. In Bhutan, however, the focus on Women's Health remained in the shadows until the past few years. The expectant mothers were only assigned to regular check-ups. The physical therapy services were never introduced to them. The factors could be mainly due to lack of awareness among Community Health team about the importance of exercises to treat common complains during pregnancy like backache, ankle swelling, urinary incontinence and so on. Secondly, pregnant women rarely consulted Physiotherapy unit as they were not referred to the latter. And partly the gender discrimination by male Physiotherapists could also be a contributing factor but it could just be an assumption. However, over the last few years, few keen physiotherapists along with technicians saw the need to develop this unit and they brought up the Women's health unit with evidence-based exercise routines for all women.

### Methods:

In November 2013, an informal survey was jointly conducted by Physiotherapy staff and CHD. The questionnaire was administered to 209 women attending ANC, PNC and FP under CHD. The assessment revealed the complaints of backache, perineal pain, sleep disturbances, difficulty in breathing and urinary incontinence. The problems were greatest during the 2nd and 3rd trimester of pregnancy.

Introduction of ANC and PNC Exercise Routine at Women's Health unit under Physiotherapy.

Based on the research it was found that women can begin exercise class when she attains 24 weeks of POG. And there are 3 types of classes which are taken by the therapist usually on a group basis:

#### A) ANC Sessions:

- 1) Basic class: First introductory class.
- 2) Advanced Class: Includes strengthening exercises and resistive exercises. The women with previous LCSC are exempted from this and pushing class.
- 3) Pushing class:

After 37 weeks of POG, the techniques of pushing the baby during the time of labour are taught.

#### B) PNC sessions:

Here the therapist counsels the mother on correct posture during breast feeding, back posture, continuation of Kegel's to enhance sutures healing and help the mothers with their individual complaints.

#### Flow chart:

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