

# **Effect of eating Palm Date on Breast Feeding and Uterine Involution**

*Thesis*

Submitted for Partial Fulfillment of Master  
Degree in Maternity and Neonatal Nursing

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## List of Abbreviations

| Abbreviations                                         | Meaning                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (Beuno, phuno, Bni, Bnr, Benrt, Amit, Bnrit and Bniw) | Names for date juice                                                                                     |
| <b>2 F↓ umbilicus</b>                                 | 2 cm beneath the umbilicus                                                                               |
| <b>BUBBLE-LE</b>                                      | Breasts, uterus, bowel function, bladder, lochia, episiotomy / perineum, lower extremities, and emotions |
| <b>DVT</b>                                            | Deep vein thrombosis (DVT),                                                                              |
| <b>HPL</b>                                            | Human placental lactogen hormone                                                                         |
| <b>Phoenix dactylifera <i>L</i></b>                   | Palm date                                                                                                |
| <b>REEDA</b>                                          | REEDA stands for redness, edema, ecchymosis, discharge, and approximation.                               |

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## Introduction

The postpartum period covers the time period from birth until approximately 6 weeks after delivery. This is a time of healing and rejuvenation as the mother's body returns to pre-pregnancy states. Moreover, postpartum period is a stressful one for myriad reasons, such as fatigue, physical stress of pregnancy and birth, and the nonstop work required to take care of the newborn and to meet the needs of other family members consequently the new mother may ignore her own nutrition needs whether mother is breastfeeding or bottle feeding (*Janrain, 2010*).

At this period of time the reproductive system especially goes through tremendous adaptation to return to pre-pregnancy state. As all organs and tissue of reproductive system are involved. The events after birth with the shedding of placenta and subsequent uterine involution, involve substantial tissue destruction and subsequent repair and remodeling (*Ricci & Kyle's, 2009*).

Involution begins immediately after delivery of the placenta, when uterine muscle fibers contract firmly around maternal blood vessels at the area where the placenta was attached. This contraction controls bleeding from the area left denuded when the placenta separated. The uterus decreases in size as muscle fibers, which have been stretched for many months, contract and gradually regain their former contour and

size. Although the total number of cells remains unchanged, the enlarged muscle cells of the uterus undergo catabolic changes in protein cytoplasm that cause a reduction in individual cell size. The products of the catabolic process are absorbed by the bloodstream and excreted in the urine as nitrogenous waste (*Pillitteri, 2010*).

Moreover, regeneration of the uterine epithelial lining begins soon after childbirth. The outer portion of the endometrial layer is expelled with the placenta. Within 2 to 3 days, the remaining decidua separates into two layers. The first layer is superficial and is shed in the lochia. The basal layer containing residual endometrial glands remains intact to provide the source of new endometrium. Regeneration of the endometrium, except at the site of placental attachment, occurs by 16 days after birth (*Pillitteri, 2010*).

Therefore, location of the uterine fundus helps determine whether involution is progressing normally. Immediately after delivery the uterus is about the size of a large grape fruit or soft ball and weighs approximately 1000 g. The fundus can be palpated midway between the symphysis pubis and umbilicus. Within 12 hours the fundus rises to the level of the umbilicus, or slightly above or below the umbilicus after that the uterus typically descends from the level of the umbilicus at rate of 1 cm (1 fingerbreadths) per day. by the end of 10 days the fundus usually can't be palpated because it has descended into the true pelvis (*Murray and McKinney, 2010*).

In addition, the uterus of a breastfeeding mother may contract even more quickly, because of oxytocin, which is released with breastfeeding, stimulates uterine contractions. However, breastfeeding alone is not sufficient to protect against postpartum hemorrhage (*Pillitteri, 2010*).

Lochia is vaginal discharge that occurs after birth. It results from involution during which the superficial layer of the decidua basalis becomes necrotic and is sloughed off. Immediately after childbirth, lochia is bright red and consists mainly of blood, fibrinous products, decidual cells, and red and white blood cells. the lochia from the uterus is alkaline but becomes acidic as it passes through the vagina. It is roughly equal to the amount occurring during a heavy menstrual period the average amount of lochia discharge is 240-270 ml. Therefore, nurse must assess lochia carefully in terms of amount, color, odor and change with activity and time since changes in the color and amount of lochia also provide information about whether involution is progressing normally (*Ricci & Kyle's, 2009*).

There are many factors that facilitate uterine involution as complete expulsion of amniotic membranes and placenta at birth, a complications free labor and birth process, breast feeding and ambulation. On the other hand, factors that inhibit involution include a prolonged labor and difficult birth, incomplete expulsion of amniotic membranes and placenta, uterine infection, over distension of uterine muscles, a full

bladder, anesthesia, and close childbirth spacing (*Ricci & Kyle's, 2009*).

Woman's nutritional status and habits can significantly influence her health through replacement of nutrients loss during pregnancy or birth, return to healthy weight, and breastfeeding at postpartum period. Yet, good nutrition resembling warm food and herbal medicines are believed to promote wound healing, prevent infection, chronic illness, and increase the quality and quantity of milk for breast feeding. So, getting the diet right after birth is just as important as before or during pregnancy (*Nikniaz et al., 2009 and Anurag, 2011*).

Palm dates can be considered as an ideal food that provides a wide range of essential nutrients with many potential health benefits. Date fruit has calcium, serotonin, tannin, linoleic acid and prochcidase enzyme that they are important for bleeding control. Also, it has much glucose that it is the most important source of production of energy in body and also it is the best food for muscles of uterus (*Vyawahare et al., 2009*).

In addition, palm date is the best food for pregnant and postpartum mothers. Dates re-establish blood and nutrients that are perfect for infants through breast milk mothers consumed dates, treating anemia, restlessness and tiredness. Ruthab (wet dates) prevents bleeding for women after childbirth, and accelerate the process of the position of the uterus as usual, before the next pregnancy. This is because the fresh dates contained oxytocin hormone-like hormone, which can help the

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process of uterine involution, and breastfeeding (*Janrain, 2010*).

Primary responsibilities of nurses in postpartum settings are to assess postpartum clients, provide care and teaching, and, if necessary, report any significant findings. Postpartum nurses are essentially detectives searching for findings that might lead to negative outcomes for clients if left unattended. Thus, it is imperative for nurses to distinguish between normal and abnormal findings and to have a clear understanding of the nursing care necessary to promote clients' health and well-being (*Nadine, 2010*).

Moreover, providing essential, cost effective care is a challenge for maternity nurses. Nursing management during postpartum period focuses on assessing woman's ability to adapt to physiologic and psychological changes occurring at this time. Based on this assessment finding the nurse plan and implement care to address woman and family needs that accomplished by multi roles of nurse as direct care provider, mentors, educators, counselor and researcher (*Ricci & Kyle's, 2009*).

### **Justification of the study:**

There is no previous study to evaluate the effect of eating palm date on breast feeding and uterine involution isn't done in postpartum area in Ain shams maternity hospital before, so there are this study conducted to study the effect of eating palm

date on breast feeding and uterine involution. But otherwise multiple benefits of palm date there are studies are made about effect of palm date during pregnancy and labour.

The postpartum period is often neglected by maternity care in both developing and developed countries. In addition, women's needs during this period have been all too often eclipsed by the attention given to pregnancy and birth. The lack of postpartum care ignores the fact that the majority of maternal deaths and disabilities occur during the postpartum period and that early neonatal mortality remains high (*WHO, 2007*).

Eating palm dates is a natural method that improve uterine involution and is a preferable method than medicines which prevent postpartum bleeding and decrease maternal mortality rate .

Postpartum hemorrhage (PPH) is responsible for around 25% of maternal mortality worldwide *WHO; (2009)* reaching as high as 60% in some countries. In Egypt, postpartum hemorrhage is the attributed cause for 32% of all maternal deaths, and 46% of all direct maternal death, ninety-nine percent of all postpartum hemorrhage deaths were avoidable (*Hogan et al., 2010*).

Uterine involution normally occurs within 6–8 weeks after delivery, although the speed and degree of uterine involution varies greatly from woman to woman. Poor uterine involution has been shown to be closely related to maternal

morbidity and, in particular, postpartum hemorrhage. The natural method used by the nurse to help in the recovery of the uterus is to practice dietary therapy during postpartum period (*Hoveyda and MacKenzie, 2001*).