Chapter 30
The Postpartum Uterus
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Objectives
- Describe changes in the uterus, ovaries and ligaments after delivery.
- Explain normal postpartum physiology.
- Recognize the sonographic appearance of the normal and abnormal postpartum uterus.
- Identify causes and sonographic appearance of puerperal infections.
- Summarize postpartum ovarian vein thrombophlebitis findings.
- List cesarean section complications.

Post-partum Appearance
- Cervical os open and ill defined
- Homogeneous myometrium
- Enlarged myometrial vessels
- Thick endometrium
- Endometrial free fluid
- Large uterus
- Flacid uterine ligaments

Post Partum Hemorrhage
- Vaginal delivery
  - Blood loss greater than 500 ml
- Cesarean delivery
  - Blood loss greater than 1000 ml
- Most common cause is abnormal placental attachment
  - Placenta accreta
  - Placenta increta
  - Placenta percreta
Post Partum Hemorrhage

- Other causes
  - Endometritis
  - RPOC
  - Uterine atony

Puerperal Infection

- Symptoms occur in first 24 hours after delivery
  - Temperature over 100.4°F/38°C
  - Chills
  - Headache
  - Malaise
  - Anorexia
  - Large tender uterus
  - Lochia

Types of Infection

- Kidney
- Breast
- Endometritis
- Thrombophlebitis

Endometritis

- Infection of the endometrium
- Due to
  - Migration of normal flora
  - PROM
  - RPOC
  - Prolonged labor
  - Vaginal delivery after a C-section

Endometritis – Sonographic Appearance

- Thick irregular endometrium
- Possible fluid in the endocervical canal
- Gas
Postpartum Ovarian Vein Thrombophlebitis (PVOT)
- Clot within the ovarian vein
- Increased with cesarean deliveries
- Virchow’s triad
  - Hypercoagulability of blood during pregnancy & the post-partum period
  - Venous stasis
  - Venous wall damage as a result of uterus expansion and contraction
- Occurs most often in the right side

Cesarean Section Complications
- Hematoma
- Infection