




Maternal Mortality

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2007


536,000 maternal deaths worldwide
99% occurred in developing countries






Definition


- Maternal Death is the death of a woman within 42 days of the end of a pregnancy
 - Regardless of the duration of the pregnancy
 - Regardless of the site of the pregnancy





2007

536,000 maternal deaths each year
OR
Every minute of every day a woman dies during pregnancy or childbirth






In contrast...


South Australia reports maternal deaths at 3 yearly intervals...
For the last triennium there were 3 maternal deaths in the state.





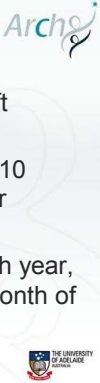
Adult lifetime risk of maternal death

- The chance that a 15 year old girl will eventually die from a maternal cause
- Developed world
 - 1:7,300
- Australia
 - 1:13,300
- Africa
 - 1:26



The consequences of maternal death

- More than 1 million children are left motherless each year
- Newborns whose mothers die are 10 times more likely to die before their second birthday
- Of the 130 million babies born each year, 4 million will die during their first month of life




Major causes of maternal mortality

- Haemorrhage
- Sepsis
- Eclampsia
- Obstructed Labour
- Unsafe Abortion



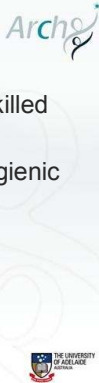
Unsafe Abortion

Every 8 minutes a woman dies as a result of a complication following unsafe abortion



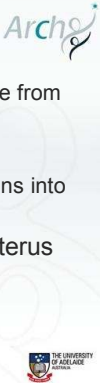
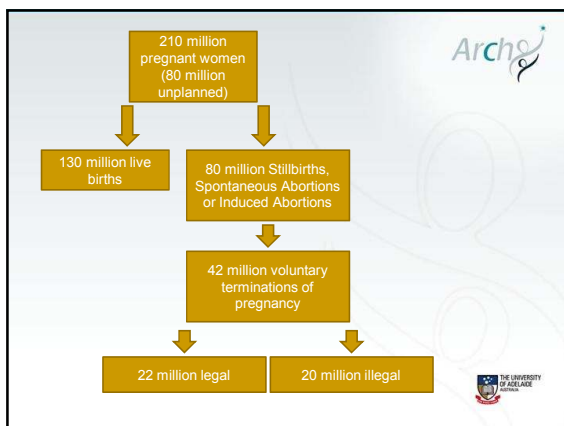
Unsafe Abortion

- Abortion performed by an unskilled person
- Abortion performed in an un-hygienic environment



Unsafe Abortion

- Oral or injectable medication
 - Drinking turpentine, bleach, tea made from livestock manure
- Vaginal preparation
 - Insertion of caustic herbal preparations into the vagina or cervix
- Foreign body introduced into the uterus
 - Sticks, coat hanger, chicken bones
- Trauma to maternal abdomen
 - Falling from roof or top of stairs
 - Pummelling of abdomen

Unsafe Abortion

- Accounts 65-70,000 maternal deaths
- Over 5 million women have temporary or permanent disability
- Over 3 million women suffer sepsis & genital tract infection
- 1.7 million women have secondary infertility



Unsafe Abortion

Of the 20 million women who have an unsafe abortion
a further 5 million women attempt abortion.

These women
often undergo multiple attempts, and are
often unsuccessful.



Unsafe Abortion

Of women attempting unsafe abortion,
2.5 million are aged less than 20 years.

Each year, 220,000 children lose their
mother from abortion related deaths.

Female children are often then removed
from school to fulfil their lost mother's role



Major causes of maternal mortality

- Haemorrhage
- Sepsis
- Eclampsia
- Obstructed Labour
- Unsafe Abortion



Solutions

- Access to safe and effective medications
 - **Misoprostol**
 - Prostaglandin medication
 - Can be administered orally
 - Costs 35 cents
 - Can be used to
 - Safely induce abortion
 - Safely induce labour at term
 - Manage haemorrhage during childbirth
 - Manage haemorrhage following abortion



Solutions

- Access to safe and effective medications
 - **Magnesium Sulphate**
 - Can be administered intra-muscularly
 - Costs less than \$1 (including syringe and needle)
 - Used to treat and prevent eclampsia



Solutions



- Access to skilled birth attendant
 - Less than 60% of women in developing countries have access to a skilled birth attendant
 - Less than 35% of women in developing countries have access to a health professional prior to birth



Solutions



- Access to health services
 - Performance of safe abortion
 - Family planning services
 - Use of condoms
 - Use of oral contraceptive pill
 - 1 month supply costs approximately \$1 to manufacture
 - Widespread availability without requirement for medical prescription



Solutions



- Education
 - Of the 137 million illiterate young people world-wide, 2/3rd are female
 - Factors contributing to poor education
 - Fees, transport, cultural bias keeping girls at home
 - Lack of female teachers
 - Lack of sanitary products; shared toilet facilities
 - Sexual harassment (teachers, male students)
 - Child marriage (and view that no gain to send girls to school)



Solutions



- Benefits of Educating Females
 - Enables participation in community life
 - Enables participation in decision making
 - More informed about their health
 - Trend to marry later, have fewer children, who are healthier and better nourished
 - More likely to encourage their children to attend school



Solutions



- Benefits of Educating Females
 - For every year of education there is a significant delay in age at marriage
 - Primary school education of girls associated with a halving of the risk of death of their children before the age of 5 years



**Until a woman's life is valued more
than a head of cattle,
there will be little improvement
in maternal mortality rates world-wide.**

