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### **Parturition and Lactation:**

- **Gestation Period:**

The average duration of pregnancy is called as gestation period.

In humans the gestation period is 9 months .

- **Parturition:**

The process of childbirth by which the foetus is expelled or delivered due to vigorous contractions of the uterus.

A fully developed foetus and placenta induces parturition.

This causes mild uterine contractions called **foetal ejection reflex**.

- This triggers the release of oxytocin from the mother's pituitary.

- Oxytocin stimulates stronger uterine contractions which stimulates more production of oxytocin.

- The stimulatory positive feedback reflex continues between the uterine contractions and oxytocin secretion.

- This leads to stronger and stronger contractions till the baby is expelled out of the uterus through the birth canal.

- Soon after the foetus is delivered the placenta is also delivered.

- **Lactation:**

The production of milk by the mammary glands of the females towards the end of the pregnancy is called lactation.

- **Colostrum:** The milk produced during the initial few days of lactation is called as the colostrum. It is rich in antibodies that provide resistance and immunity to the new-born.