

Legal Medicine and Toxicology Module:

Tutorial 05: Sexual Offence/ abortion/ child abuse

Question 1

A 26 year old mother of 2 children (A boy 3 years and a girl of 9 months) was admitted to a surgical ward with several bruises on her face and limbs with a lip laceration and a loose frontal tooth. She stated that her husband has assaulted her the previous night. At the time of the assault the baby also sustained an injury to the head (a boggy mass on the scalp and an abrasion).

You are the house officer in this ward.

- 1.1. List 2(two) medico-legal duties of the house officer and state the entries you will make in the bed-head ticket (10 marks)
- 1.2. State how you could contribute to ensuring the protection of the woman and her children from further abuse by her husband (20 marks) (4 marks x 5)

On the 2nd day the mother developed fever with chills and rigors and complained of vaginal bleeding. She had undergone a termination of pregnancy at 12 weeks of pregnancy. She requests the doctor not to divulge this information to her husband or authorities.

- 1.3. Discuss briefly your actions on the management of the patient considering the ethical, medical and legal aspects of the situation (25 marks)
- 1.4. State 4 common methods by which criminal abortions are performed in Sri Lanka (10 marks)
- 1.5. State the legal indication for a therapeutic abortion in Sri Lanka (10 marks)
- 1.6. If you are the MO-medico-legal attending to this case what are the difficulties you will face in proving criminal abortion. (25 marks)