LEOPOLD’S MANEUVERS

Maria Giroux, HBSc, MD
Leopold’s Maneuvers

- 4 maneuvers described by Leopold in 1894
- Used to diagnose fetal presentation
  - Can be used in late pregnancy and during labour between contractions
  - Difficult if obese, polyhydramnios, or anterior placenta
- Can estimate fetal size
  - Poor correlation if obese

Accuracy of Leopold’s
- Sensitivity: 88%
- Specificity: 94%
- PPV (true +): 74%
- NPV (true -): 97%
Leopold maneuvers


1. Uterine Fundus

- Used to determine fetal lie and which fetal pole (cephalic or podalic) occupies fundus
- Palpate fundus
  - Head: round, more mobile
  - Breech: large, nodular mass
2. Fetal Orientation

- Used to determine position of fetal back
- Place palms on either side of maternal abdomen, exert gentle deep pressure
  - Back: hard, resistant structure
  - Directed anteriorly, posteriorly, transversely
- Fetal extremities: numerous small irregular mobile parts
3. Fetal Presentation

- Used to confirm fetal presentation (cephalic vs breech)
- The thumb and fingers of 1 hand grasp the lower portion of maternal abdomen above pubic symphysis
  - Not engaged- movable mass is felt
4. Degree of Descent

- Used to determine the degree of descent
- Face pt’s feet, position fingertips of both hands on either side of the presenting part \(\rightarrow\) exert inwards pressure, slide caudad along the axis of pelvic inlet
  - When the head has descended, can feet anterior shoulder or the space created by the neck from the head
References