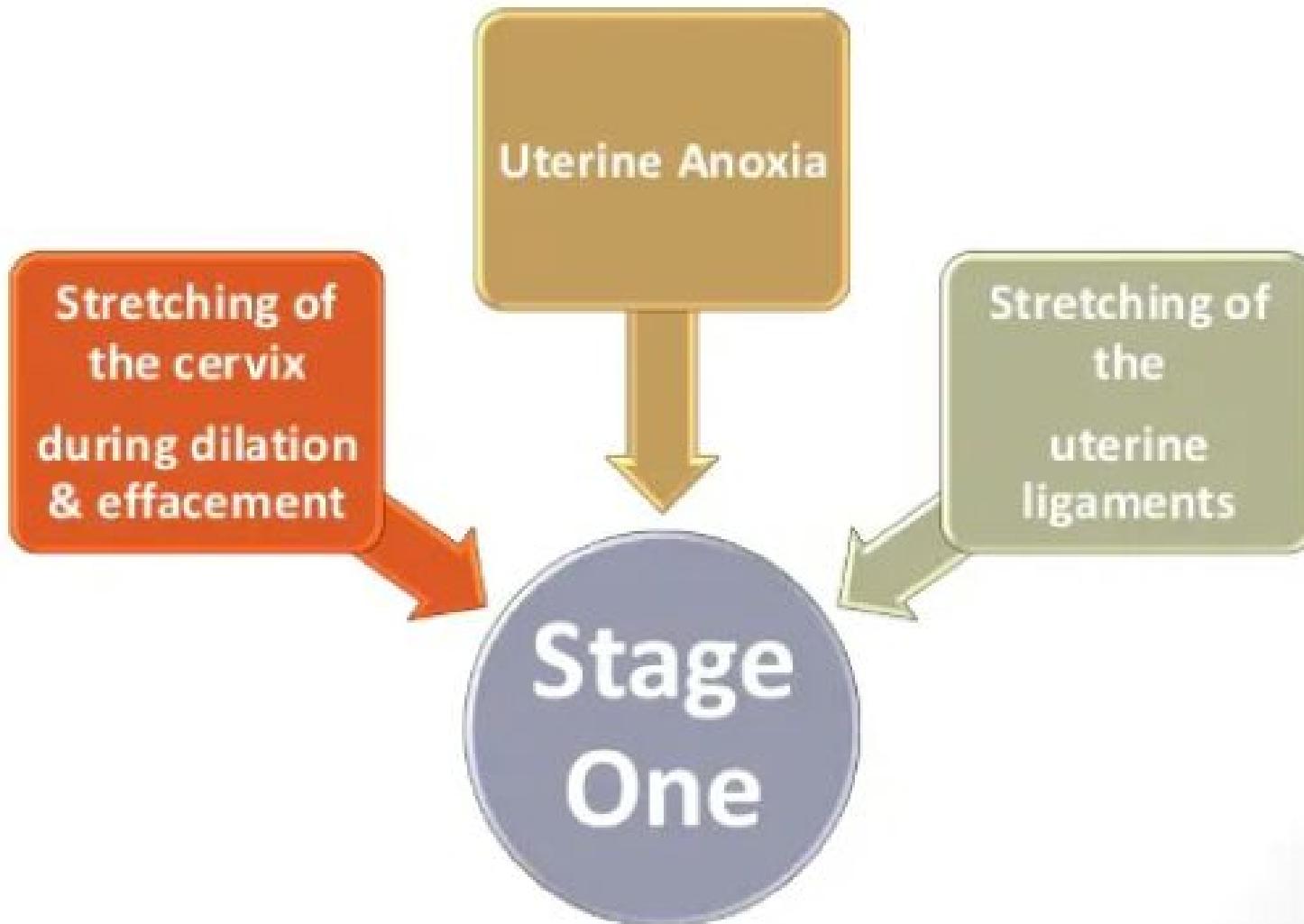


# The Pain of Labor and Childbirth

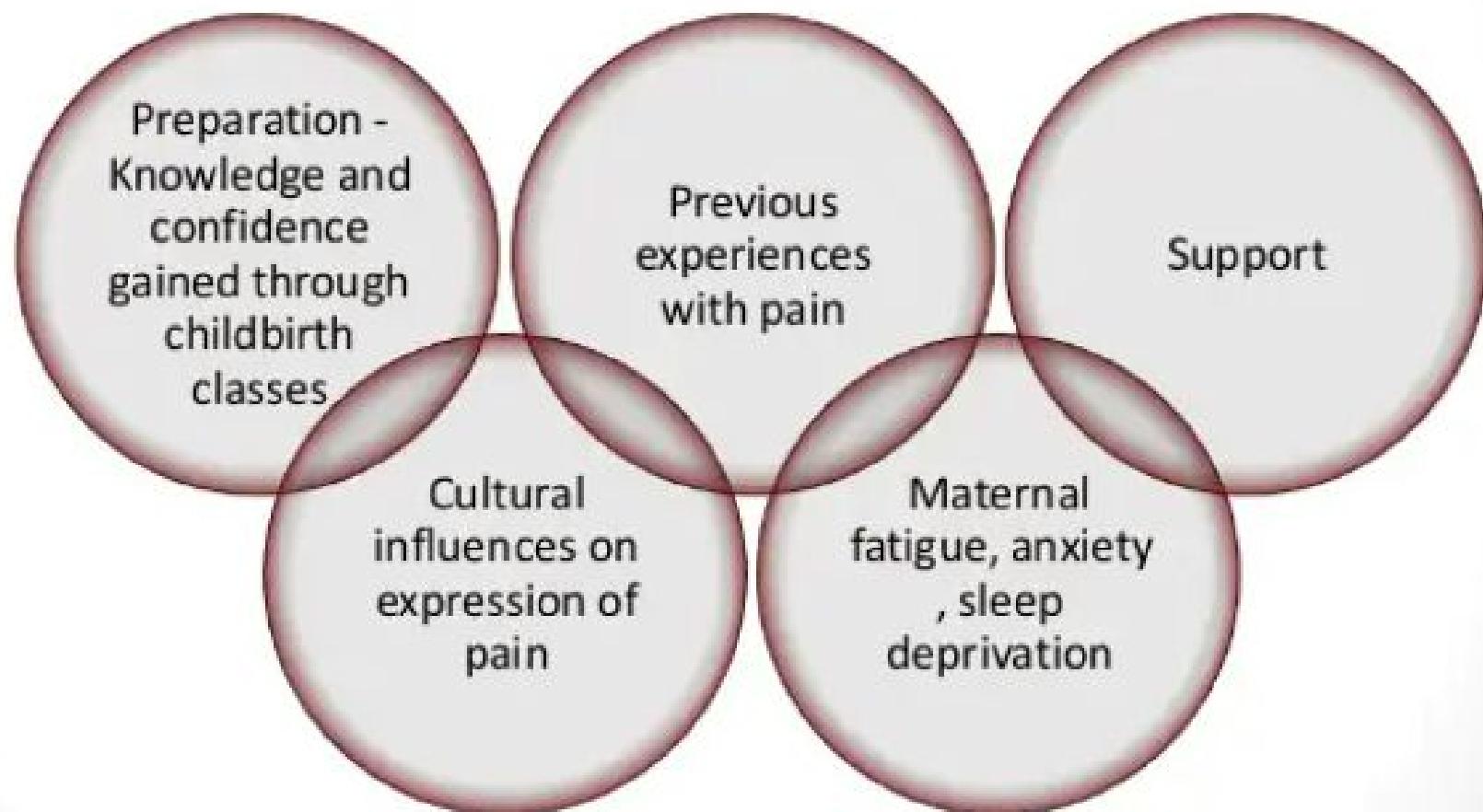
- **Unique**

- **Different from other types of pain** (usually pain is warning sign of injury)
- **Increased intensity desired and positive** (greater intensity is associated with approaching birth)
- **Occurs in predictable pattern** (begins without warning, but once established it is predictable, respite between)

# Causes of pain in labor



# Factors affecting Mothers Response to Pain in Labor



# The goal of pain management

pain management prior to delivery may help ease your anxiety in the moment of labor.

# Pain Management Principles and Techniques

- **Principles of pain relief during labor**
  - Women are more satisfied when they have control over the pain experience
  - Caregivers commonly underrate the severity of pain
  - Women who are prepared for labor usually report a more satisfying experience than do women who are not prepared

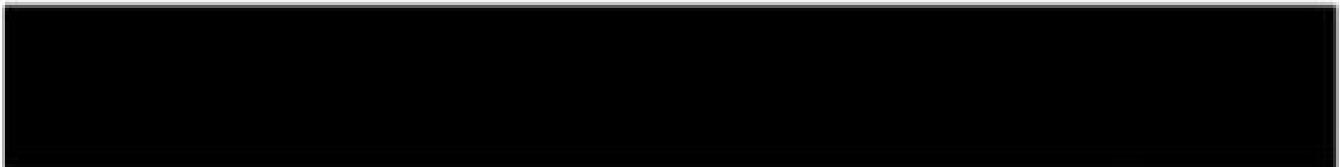
# Pain Management Principles and Techniques (cont.)

- **Non-Pharmacologic Pain Interventions**
  - **Continuous labor support-doula**
  - **Acupressure and acupuncture**
  - **Relaxation techniques**-helps to facilitate labor process
    - Patterned breathing
    - Attention focusing (imagery)
    - Movement and positioning
    - Touch and massage
    - Water therapy

# Breathing pattern



# Movement and positioning



# Touch and massage





# Water therapy



# Pain Management Principles and Techniques (cont.)

- **Advantages and disadvantages of non-pharmacologic interventions**
  - **Advantages**
    - Noninvasive
    - Address emotional and spiritual aspects of birth
    - Promote women's sense of control over pain
  - **Disadvantages**
    - Many of the interventions require special training and/or practice before birth
    - These methods are not effective for every woman

# Pharmacological Interventions

- **Analgesia and sedation**

- The use of medication to reduce the sensation of pain
    - Sedatives given to promote sedation and relaxation
    - Opioids given to promote analgesia during labor

- **Anesthesia**

- The use of medication to partially or totally block all sensation to an area of the body
    - Local, regional, general

Analgesics and  
anesthetics  
commonly used in  
labor and birth

# Pharmacological Interventions (cont.)

- **Advantages and Disadvantages of Opioid Administration**

- **Advantages**

- an increased ability for a woman to cope with labor
    - The medications may be nurse-administered

- **Disadvantages**

- Frequent occurrence of uncomfortable side effects, such as nausea and vomiting, pruritus, drowsiness, and neonatal depression
    - Pain is not eliminated completely

# Pharmacological Interventions (cont.)

- **Types of anesthesia**
  - **Local anesthesia**
    - Used to numb the perineum just before birth to allow for episiotomy and repair
  - **Regional anesthesia**
    - Involves blocking a group of sensory nerves that supply a particular organ or area of the body
  - **General anesthesia**
    - Not used frequently in obstetrics because of the risks involved