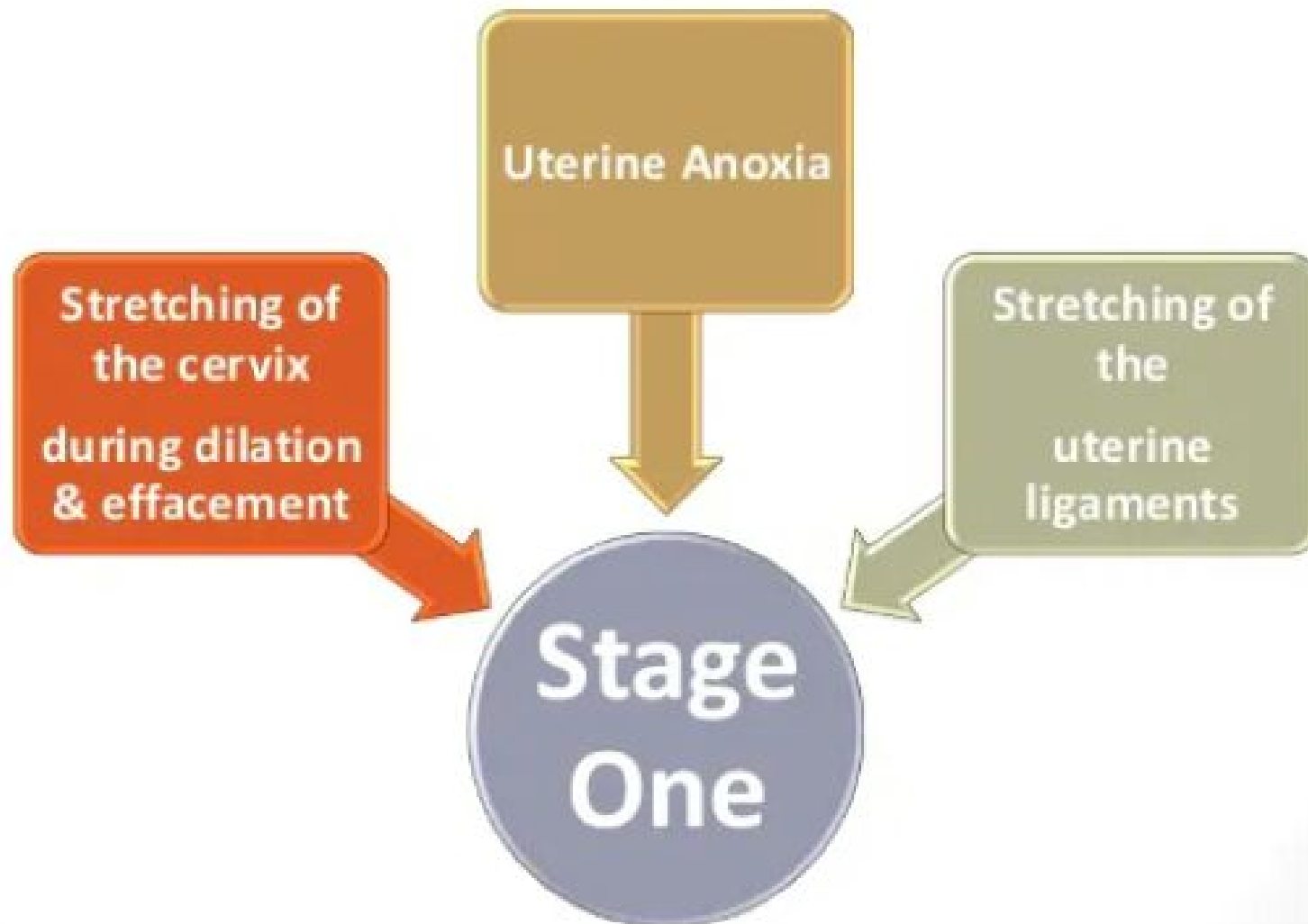


The Pain of Labor and Childbirth

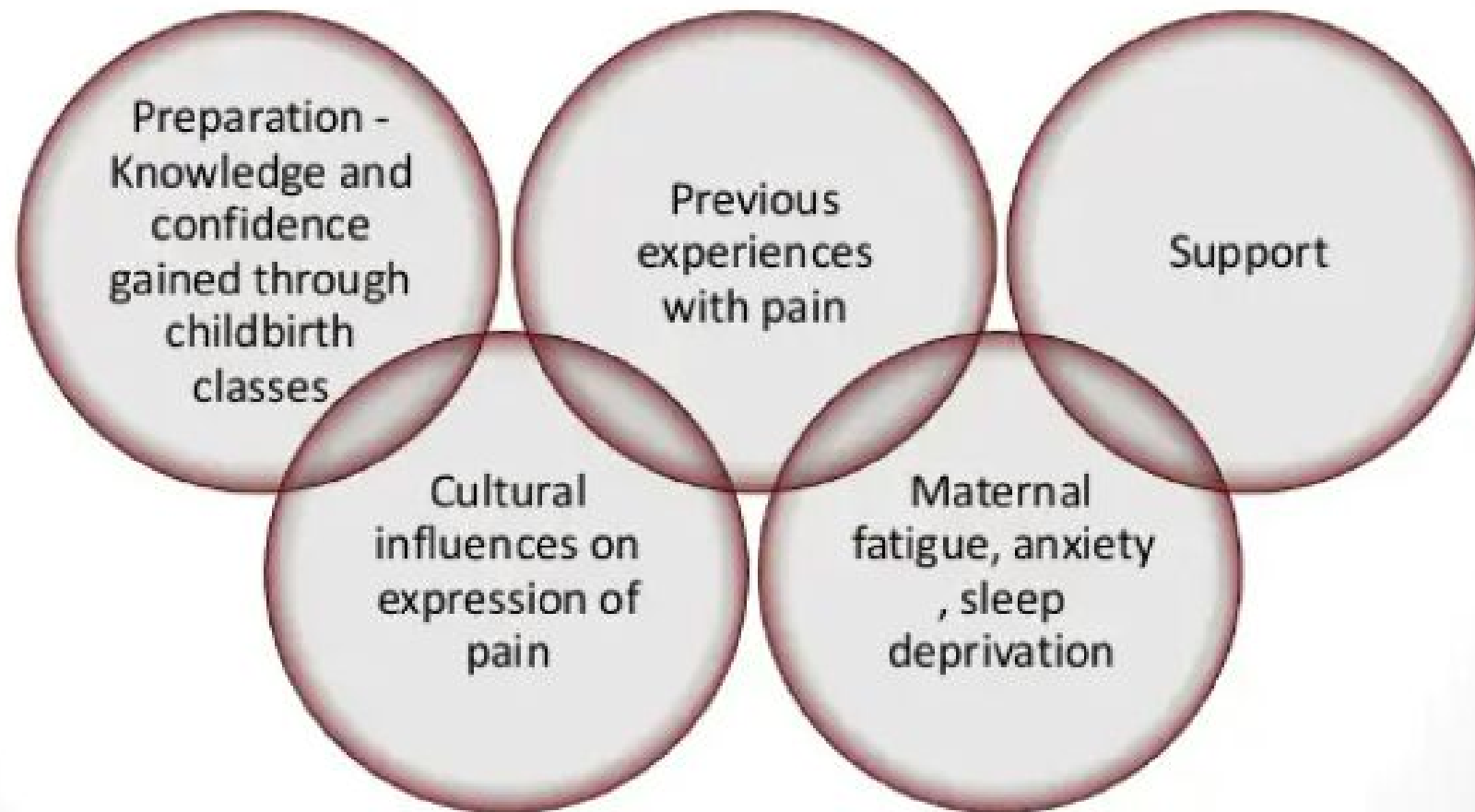
- **Unique**

- **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

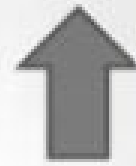
Breathing pattern



Movement and positioning



Touch and message



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