SUMMARY

BACKGROUND
Postpartum thyroiditis (PPT) is an autoimmune disorder that presents in women during the first year after parturition.

OBJECTIVES
This study determined the prevalence, characteristics and correlates of PPT among post partum women in the Northern part of Nigeria.

SUBJECTS, MATERIALS AND METHODS
This was a cross sectional case control study in which 85 women who were six weeks to nine months post partum and an equal number of age matched controls were studied for PPT. Relevant medical history and physical examination for thyroid dysfunction were carried out in the two groups of women. Blood samples for serum assays of T3, T4 and TSH and thyroid peroxidase antibodies (TPOab) were taken and analysed using ELISA method.

Data were analysed using the statistical software with Epi info 6 and SPSS.

RESULTS
PPT was found in only one case with thyrotoxicosis (1.2%). All the controls subjects had normal thyroid function test. The Mean ±SD of serum T3, T4 and TSH in the study and control subjects were similar and comparable, 1.33 ±0.37 and 1.07 ±0.36 ng/ml; 102.13 ±11.29 and 93.33
±19.34 nmol/l; and 1.77 ±1.08 and 1.57 ±1.08 mIU/L, p > 0.05 respectively. There was no significant correlation between serum T3, T4 and TPOab with the length of post partum period (r=0.017, r=0.006 and r=0.007 p > 0.05 respectively). Positive TPOab was found in 1 (1.2%) of study subjects and 3 (3.5%) of control subjects, p > 0.05.

**CONCLUSIONS**

PPT appears to be rare among Nigerian women. The cause of this apparent rarity could not be ascertained from the present study. It is recommended that a longer ‘span’ of follow up in the post partum period and studies in other centres using a larger sample size should be undertaken so as to determine the prevalence rates in other parts of the country.