18. Symptoms and Signs

Reference

Nakakita M, Takenoue K. Relaxing effects of back massage on relaxation in normal postpartum mothers*. *Nihon Josan Gakkaishi* (*Journal of Japan Academy of Midwifery*) 2009; 22(3): 362 (in Japanese). Ichushi Web ID 2009204026

1. Objectives

To evaluate the effects of back massage for relaxation in postpartum mothers.

2. Design

Quasi-randomized controlled trial (quasi-RCT).

3. Setting

Obstetrics and gynecology clinics (number of clinics not indicated), Japan.

4. Participants

Forty-five puerperants at the third day after normal delivery.

5. Intervention

Arm 1: a 20-minute massage using back oil (odorless) (n=22).

Arm 2: control (20-minute supine rest) (n=23).

No significant between-group differences in patient background including age, childbirth delivery time, blood loss, multiparous condition, episiotomy history, and baby's birth weight. Perineal tears were frequent in the control group with statistical significance.

6. Main outcome measures

Heart rate and its frequency components analyzed as relaxation indicators.

7. Main results

Treatment significantly decreased heart rate in both groups. Variability in frequency varied but did not change significantly.

8. Conclusions

Considering heart rate and frequency components as relaxation indicators, back massage had no effect on postpartum mothers.

9. Safety assessment in the article

Not mentioned.

10. Abstractor's comments

Maintaining good physical and mental health in postpartum mothers is necessary for building good maternal bonds with the child, so evaluation of health maintenance strategies is extremely important. The relaxation indicator used in this study (heart rate or autonomic nervous function) can be affected by a range of factors, so the trial environment must be carefully managed. In future evaluations, it would be preferable to use subjective sensations, brain waves, and other outcome measures as relaxation indicators.

11. Abstractor and date

Tokutake T, 19 December 2010, 28 February 2011.