

Effectiveness of Acupressure on Afterpains Among Postnatal Mothers in a Selected Hospital at Coimbatore

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ABSTRACT: Acupressure is a non-pharmacological method for managing afterpains effectively in postnatal mothers after vaginal delivery. This study aimed to identify the effectiveness of acupressure on afterpains among postnatal mothers after vaginal delivery at Sri Ramakrishna Hospital, Coimbatore. A quasi-experimental pretest-posttest control group research design was adopted for this study. Non – probability purposive sampling technique was used and 30 postnatal mothers undergoing vaginal delivery at Sri Ramakrishna hospital were selected based on inclusion and exclusion criteria. Every alternative sample was assigned to experimental group [n=15] and Control group [n=15]. Physiological parameters were assessed at the beginning of each day before intervention and pretest was assessed by using a numerical pain rating scale. Acupressure was applied for 2 minutes before breastfeeding and the post-test was assessed immediately after each intervention for five times a day from the onset of afterpains till 72 hours after vaginal delivery and at the end of each day after intervention physiological parameters were assessed. The mean and standard deviation of afterpains among postnatal mothers in the experimental group with pre-test and post-test were 7.32, 0.583 and 0.55, 1.34 respectively with a mean difference of 6.77. It proves that there is an effect of acupressure on the afterpains among the postnatal mothers in the experimental group ($t=46.69$, $p=0.001$). Student ‘t’ test was used to compare the post-test afterpains among experimental and control group postnatal mothers. It was identified that the mean and standard deviation of afterpains among postnatal mothers in the experimental and control group was 0.55, 1.34 and 6.5, 0.479 with a mean difference of 5.95 respectively. It proves that there is an effect of acupressure on the afterpains among the postnatal mothers in the experimental group. ($t = 44.07$, $p=0.001$). Hence acupressure is a pain-reducing therapy. It can be incorporated in the routine nursing care in the postnatal period and that can help minimize the afterpains for postnatal mothers and improves the comfort level and bonding between postnatal mother and baby.

Keywords: Afterpains , Among Postnatal Mothers, Acupressure.

INTRODUCTION

Puerperium is a phase after childbirth, which refers to the 6 weeks with a progressive change in the breasts for lactation and in internal reproductive organs. Besides, numerous changes occur in the mother’s physiological and psychological status. Hence postpartum changes experienced by the postnatal mothers are very strong and the quality of mother’s care during this stage is very important to ensure her health. Therefore, parents must adapt to a new family structure, and join the new-born into their family system and develop different in Soon after the removal of placenta vaginal bleeding starts and may persist for a few weeks. Thus, after the delivery of the placenta oxytocin will be increased and that compresses the blood vessels by an effective contraction and decreases the blood loss that results in afterpains. Afterpains are more often in multiparous due to periodic relaxation and vigorous contraction in subsequent pregnancies than in primigravid mothers because of good uterine tonicity. (Croft, 1995). The mechanism between

breastfeeding and afterpains is when the infant sucks the milk from the breast that stimulates the posterior pituitary gland to release oxytocin that contracts the uterus.

Mild analgesics may be prescribed to reduce the afterpains in certain mothers who cannot tolerate the pain (Leifer, 2003). Some of the techniques like head lifting, lying down with knee bending and deep breathing helps in alleviate the afterpains. (Plaembam, P. 2002). Various kinds of literature prove that the non-pharmacological treatments work better in reducing the afterpains comparing to pharmacological treatment. Moreover, the pharmacological agents may cause some of the side effects to the lactating mothers. Out of all the non-pharmacological techniques, acupressure seems to be more effective in reducing afterpains among postnatal mothers.

Acupressure is a method of relieving pain by pressing on particular points of a person's body with fingertips. These points lie along with the channels of energy in the body called meridians. When the meridians are blocked or out of balance, pain arises. A specific point along the energy lines is called acupoints where we applying gentle and firm pressure. In response to the pressure, the brain oozes endorphins, a chemical that muffles pain signals and invites pleasurable feelings. In the absence of pain, muscles relax and blood flows more freely. As tension recedes, equilibrium is maintained. (Guthrie, 2019) teractional patterns within the family unit. (Mercer et al., 1990)

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Pain is a complex phenomenon with multiple components that have an extensive impact on a person's psychosocial and physical functioning (Caffery & Pasero, 2011). Afterpains occur in the uterus during the postnatal period due to the uterine contraction that occurs when the oxytocin is released as the baby sucks the milk from the breast. Afterpains are more intense in the first 48 hours after birth and gradually subsides and disappear within four to seven days. Afterpains tend to be more intense in multiparous women than in primigravida (Betts, 2005). Current incidences say that, after a normal vaginal delivery, approximately 50% of primiparous mothers and 86% of multiparous mothers experience afterpains. (Smitha, 2016)

Flynn (2004) explained that after birth contractions are intense and uncomfortable and sometimes the pain is so severe that it affects the "Let down reflex" and bonding between mother and baby. Moreover, afterpains cause more discomfort to mothers and make them feel it as a process of labor, instead of enjoying the arrival of the baby to the world.

Out of all non-pharmacological techniques, acupressure is found to be more effective by applying pressure on various body surface points thus it circulates the energy and balance the pain symptoms (Nani, 2015). SP 6 is one of the most often used points and dynamic because of the Spleen, Liver and Kidney channels all cross at SP 6. Apart from afterpains, it can also be used to treat all problems related to digestion, menstruation, and menopause. Applying pressure to SP-6 at the beginning of breastfeeding will help to reduce the intensity of the contractions. Often the pressure to this point will have an effect in contraction that gives a "MAGICAL" effect in the reduction of afterpains. (Betts, 2005).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Effectiveness of Acupressure on Afterpains Among Postnatal Mothers in A Selected Hospital at Coimbatore.

OBJECTIVES

- Assessment of afterpains among postnatal mothers in both experimental and control group
- Determine the effectiveness of acupressure in the reduction of afterpains among the postnatal mother in the experimental group.
- Find out the association between the Afterpains and selected demographic variables among postnatal mothers

HYPOTHESES

- H0: There will not be a significant difference in the Afterpains among experimental and control group after Acupressure
- H0: There will not be a significant difference in the pretest and posttest Afterpains among an experimental group of postnatal mothers
- H0: There will not be a significant difference in the pretest and posttest Afterpains among a control group of postnatal mothers
- H0: There will not be a significant association between the pretest Afterpains and the selected demographic variables among postnatal mothers after vaginal delivery.

METHODOLOGY

A quantitative research approach and a quasi experimental pre and post test with control group design was adopted in this study. The study was conducted in the Obstetrical and Gynecological ward of Sri Ramakrishna Hospital, Coimbatore. A non – probability Purposive sampling technique was used and 30 postnatal mothers undergoing vaginal delivery. Every alternative samples was assigned to experimental group [n=15] and Control group [n=15].

RESULTS

Table 1: Analysis of the Effect of Acupressure on Pretest And Posttest Afterpains Among Postnatal Mothers in The Experimental Group

Sl. No	Experimental Group	Mean	SD	Mean difference	Calculated 't' value	Table value
1	Pretest	7.32	0.583	6.77	46.69***	4.140
2	Posttest	0.55	1.34			

***Significant at 0.001 level
Paired 't' test was used to analyze the effect of acupressure on the afterpains

among the postnatal mothers in the experimental group. It was identified that the mean level of afterpains in pre-test and post-test was 7.32 and 0.55 respectively with a mean difference of 6.77. Likewise, the standard deviation of the pre-test and post-test was 0.583 and 1.34 respectively. The calculated 't' value 46.69 was greater than the table value of 4.140 at 0.001 level of significance.

Hence the hypothesis “there will be no significant difference in the afterpains before and after acupressure among the postnatal mothers” was rejected. It proves that there is an effect of acupressure on the afterpains among the postnatal mothers in the experimental group.

Table 2: Analysis of the Posttest Afterpains Among Experimental and Control Group Postnatal Mothers.

Sl. No	Study Groups	Mean	SD	Mean difference	Calculated 't' value	Table value
1	Experimental group	0.55	1.34	5.95	44.07***	3.674
2	Control group	6.5	0.479			

***Significant at 0.001 level

Student 't' test was used to compare the posttest afterpains among experimental and control group postnatal mothers. It was identified that the mean level of afterpains among postnatal mothers in the experimental and control group was 0.55 and 6.5 respectively with a mean difference of 5.95. Likewise, the standard deviation of the experimental and control group was 1.34 and 0.479 respectively. The calculated 't' value 44.07 was greater than the table value of 4.140 at 0.001 level of significance.

Hence the hypothesis "there is no significant difference in the afterpains between experimental and control group postnatal mothers undergoing acupressure" was rejected. It proves that there is a significant reduction of afterpains among the postnatal mothers in the experimental group.

Conclusion

The finding reveals that acupressure is the treatment of choice for the majority of postnatal mothers with afterpains. The afterpains experienced by postnatal mothers after vaginal delivery makes the postnatal mothers inactive and hinders their bonding with the newborn. Acupressure is highly cost-effective in reducing afterpains among postnatal mothers after vaginal delivery. Hence, the researcher suggests that the nurse-midwives should adopt this intervention in their clinical practice as routine care to reduce afterpains among postnatal mothers after vaginal delivery and thus promote their comfort, well-being, and bonding with the newborn.

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