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Evaluation on the use of Massage for Pregnant Women during Labor

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Introduction

With the growing popularity of natural birth, non-pharmacological means of pain relief have become increasingly important during labor. Labor is a stressful experience due to the severe pain and fear it brings. Massage has been demonstrated to be effective in decreasing pain and anxiety during labor (Chang, Wang & Chen 2002).

Objectives

The objective of this review is to evaluate clients' feedback and outcome after receiving massage during labor.

Methodology

Birth massage has been adopted in Queen Elizabeth Hospital since 2013. Birth massage sessions were provided with application of grape seed oil by trained midwives according to clients' specific needs and major complains. Clients' pain and anxiety level were self-rated before and 15 minutes after massage with 5 point Likert rating scales. Besides, they were encouraged to comment the birth massage they received after delivery. The delivery outcome was also measured

Result

A total of 75 cases were reviewed during the period from October 2014 to September 2015. 55 clients were nulliparous and 20 were multiparous, while 50 % of them aged between 31-35 years old. Majority of clients rated decreased labor pain level, with the mean score dropped from 4.52 to 3.37 after receiving massage. Regarding effects on back pain, mean score was dropped from 4.02 to 2.96. Reduced anxiety level was reported with score 2.77 from 4.13 before massage. From the interviews after delivery, majority of clients revealed that birth massage allowed them to have better control over pain. Women expressed feeling of comfort and relaxation after receiving birth massage. For delivery outcome, 55 clients had normal vaginal delivery, 13 had instrumental delivery, while 3 cases had undergone caesarean section. This is compatible with the overall statistics. The review showed a positive feedback from clients using birth massage as a pain relief measure during labor. Pain and anxiety level were also significantly reduced. No major complications or negative consequences on delivery outcome were noted. Performing birth massage to

laboring women allows them to cope better with labor pain and stress. More importantly, women's sense of control and satisfaction can be promoted through participation in pain relief options, thus leading to positive childbirth experience. Birth massage, being a safe and effective non-pharmacological pain relief measure during labor, should be promoted in obstetric unit. Research can be carried out in future to further investigate perceptions of women receiving massage during labor and its effects on labor progress.