

Massage Benefits Pregnant Women Who Experience Depression.

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Hi Everyone

Hope everyone is doing well and making health and wellness their number one priority these days. I heard on the news that in real difficult financial periods in history, people actually made their health the number one priority. Is it an instinct, or just a logical choice?

Let me know what you think?

I've been working with pregnant women over the years and know how difficult the experience is for most women on all levels. Going through it personally with my wife I experienced it first hand and will forever be in awe and appreciation of the female power. Many fall into a post partum depression after the birth and have a hard time coping if they don't have the support system and therapeutic help. Shiatsu is a powerful, nurturing therapy that can help and also be a strong supporting and healing compliment to traditional therapies.

Hers is a study done to prove the effects of massage on pregnant women who going through depression.

RESEARCH

Massage Benefits Pregnant Women Who Going Through Depression.

Massage eases anxiety and depression, as well as leg and back pain, in depressed pregnant women, and their newborns seem to benefit as well, according to a recent study.

"Massage effects on depressed pregnant women" was conducted by staff of the Touch Research Institutes at the University Of Miami School Of Medicine, in Florida.

Eighty-four depressed pregnant women in their second trimester participated in the study. They were randomly

assigned to a massage group, a muscle-relaxation group or a standard-care control group. A group of 28 non-depressed pregnant women were used as a comparison group.

Women in the massage group received two 20-minute massages per week for 16 weeks, provided by their significant others. Professional massage therapists taught the significant others the massage routine, which focused 10 minutes on each side of the mother as she laid on either side with pillows behind her legs.

Subjects in the muscle-relaxation group were taught a 20-minute, progressive muscle-relaxation routine to be performed at home twice a week for 16 weeks.

Immediate effects of the intervention were measured before and after sessions on the first and last days of the study. These included anxiety, measured on the State Anxiety Inventory; depressed mood, measured on the Profile of Mood States Scale; and leg and back pain, assessed on the VITAS pain scale, a visual analog scale.

More sustained effects were evaluated by comparing outcomes from the first and last days of the study. The Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depression Scale was used to rate depressive symptoms of the previous week. Urine samples were used to measure levels of cortisol; catecholamines, including norepinephrine, epinephrine and dopamine; and serotonin.

Fetal activity was monitored at 18-24 weeks and again at 36 weeks, using interval recording on a real-time ultrasound scanner. Every three seconds for three minutes, the researcher recorded whether the fetus was making single-limb movements, multiple-limb movements, gross body movements, or no movements.

After birth, the Obstetrics Complications Scale was used to assess complications that arose during the pregnancy, delivery and neonatal period. The Postnatal Factor Scale was used to evaluate any complications in the newborn, and the Brazelton Neonatal Behaviour Assessment was used to assess the newborn's reflexes, social responses and motor behaviours.






Results of the study showed that women in the massage group had significantly increased levels of serotonin and dopamine, and significantly decreased levels of cortisol and norepinephrine at the end of the study. Women in the other groups showed no significant changes in any of these levels from the first to last days of the study.

The massage group also showed a greater decrease in depression on the last day of the study as compared to the first, while the other groups showed no significant changes. There was also a greater improvement in mood and decreased anxiety among women in the massage group immediately after the massage on both the first and last days of the study, as well as decreased leg and back pain.

Results also showed a greater decrease in fetal activity in the massage group as compared to the other groups, as well as fewer premature births, as revealed on the Obstetrics Complications Scale. Newborns of the women who received massage performed better on the Brazelton assessment as well.

"Overall the findings suggest that massage therapy is effective for reducing pregnant women's stress hormones, stressful mood states, leg and back pain and for lessening obstetric and post-natal complications, hence improving neonatal outcomes," state the study's authors. "They also suggest the efficacy of using a significant other as massage therapist."

-Source: Touch Research Institutes at the University of Miami



School of Medicine, in Florida. Authors: T. Field, Ph.D.; M.A. Diego; M. Hernandez-Reif, Ph.D.; S. Schanberg; and C. Kuhn. Originally published in the Journal of Psychosomatic Obstetrics and Gynaecology, June 2004, Vol. 25, No. 2, pp. 115-122.