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ABSTRACTS

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The effect of massage on newborns

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Massage therapy is one of the most used and effective methods in alternative therapies. Massage is also a therapeutic nursing method and affects the baby's behaviour status, respiration and stress level positively. In this review, it is aimed to examine the effect of massage on newborns. The benefits of massage are revealed through many researches and this method is a simple, inexpensive and effective way to support the development of the baby. Baby massage promotes sense of trust in the baby by maintaining the baby's body contact, helps to reduce the stress of the baby and supports the positive emotional bond between mother and baby. Besides, it has been reported that the massage helps the baby's needs to be recognized quickly by the caregiver and thus strengthens the parenting skills. Mothers who regularly massage their babies everyday have been reported to have high scores on emotional attachment on their babies. In addition to improving attachment behaviour, massage increases the mother's prolactin level and breastfeeding success rises with its nourishing feelings. In newborn pain management, massage is a non-pharmacological method, and a proven and efficient technique. The pain scores of infants who underwent massage during invasive intervention were found to be 50% lower than the untreated group. Colic which causes pain in the first months of life in infants is an uncomfortable condition. Massage has helped to reduce attacks in infants with colic episodes.

As a result, it is important that child health nurses, who have primary tasks in contributing to mother's infant attachment, supporting breastfeeding and clearing up painful complications that may arise in newborns, should contribute to this practical, cheap and effective operation by working together with parents.

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