

THE EFFECT OF HYDROTHERAPY ON THE MOTHER-NEWBORN OUTCOMES AND BIRTH SATISFACTION IN VAGINAL DELIVERIES

Background

In hydrotherapy, which is one of the non-pharmacological methods used to reduce labor pain and provide relaxation and comfort, the pregnant woman is in warm water deep enough. Warm water and the buoyancy of the water provide relaxation, reduce labor pain, relieves stress, and improve the process [1,2].

Aim(s)

This study was carried out in two stages, retrospective and prospective case-control type, to examine the effect of hydrotherapy applied at birth on mother-newborn outcomes and birth satisfaction.

Methods

The population of the study consisted of individuals who underwent hydrotherapy in labor (N=44) and gave vaginal birth (N=2471) between July 2018 and March 2020 in a gynecology and pediatrics hospital in Istanbul. The sample of the study consisted of 42 individuals who underwent hydrotherapy in labor (case group), and 60 women (control group) selected by systematic sampling method who had similar obstetric characteristics to the individuals in the hydrotherapy group and who had a vaginal delivery in labor without the hydrotherapy. Mother-Newborn Information Form, Mother Identification Form, and Birth Satisfaction Scale were used to collect data. In the first stage of the study, the records of the individuals in the hydrotherapy and control groups were examined and the results of the mother and newborn at the time of birth were obtained retrospectively. In the second stage, women were interviewed between May-October 2021 and their satisfaction with the birth was determined. Scientific research permission was obtained from Istanbul Provincial Health Directorate and ethical approval was obtained from the ethics committee. Data analysis was performed using the Pearson chi-square test, Mann-Whitney U test, and independent t-test. In the analysis of the results, $p < 0.05$ was considered significant.

Results

It was determined that there was no statistically significant difference between the individuals in the hydrotherapy and control groups in terms of sociodemographic and obstetric characteristics, and birth and newborn outcomes ($p > 0.05$). There was a statistically significant difference in favor of the hydrotherapy group in terms of the Birth Satisfaction Scale scores and the findings of preferring normal delivery in the next delivery between the two groups ($p < 0.001$).

Discussion

The data obtained showed that hydrotherapy applied in labor had a positive effect on women's birth satisfaction and preference for normal birth in their next birth, without a negative effect on mother-newborn outcomes. In the literature, it is stated that hydrotherapy applied during childbirth increases birth satisfaction, contributes to women's freedom of movement, and reduces labor pains [3].

Implications and future perspectives

Dissemination of hydrotherapy practices in maternity units will contribute to women having a positive birth experience and to prefer normal delivery in their future deliveries.

References

1. Cluett ER., Burns E., Cuthbert A. (2018). Immersion in water during labour and birth. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, (5).
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3. Liu Y., Liu Y., Huang X. et al. (2014). A comparison of maternal and neonatal outcomes between water immersion during labor and conventional labor and delivery. BMC Pregnancy Childbirth 14, 160.