

ASSISTANCE TO THE IMMEDIATE PUERPERIUM - ROLE OF PHYSICAL THERAPY

Hypothesis / aims of study

Puerperium is the period between the expulsion of the placenta and the return to pre-gravidic physiological condition. It is an important phase that can cause musculoskeletal complications, which can consequently generate pain and discomfort. In this context, the role of Physical Therapy is fundamentally active in the prevention and treatment of these complications. In this sense, the objective of this study was to verify the effects of the physiotherapeutic intervention in the care of women in immediate puerperium in a Public Maternity Unit.

Study design, materials and methods

The project was approved by the ethics committee of the institution and the volunteers signed the informed consent. Women in immediate puerperium after vaginal or cesarean delivery were included. All women were submitted to physiotherapeutic evaluation, followed by a single intervention with mean duration of 45 minutes, including diaphragmatic and abdominal reeducation exercises, pelvic floor muscle training, metabolic exercises, flatus elimination maneuver, guidelines of adequate posture, encouraging walking and breastfeeding. Before and after the exercises, the Visual Pain Scale (EVA) and subjective scale for general well-being were applied. In the statistical analysis, the level of significance used for the tests was 5%.

Results

50 puerperal women (25 vaginal births and 25 cesarean sections) were evaluated. After the intervention, which achieved 100% adherence, there was a significant improvement in pain in the cesarean and vaginal delivery groups ($p < 0.05$), as shown in table 1.

Table 1. Comparison between initial and final Visual Pain Scale (EVA)

	Cesarean delivery average (SD)	Vaginal delivery average (SD)	p
Initial	3,99±2,11	2,0±1,52	< 0,001*
Final	2,85±2,63	1,34±0,92	p=0,036*

SD = standard deviation

Interpretation of results

the exercise protocol proved to be effective for pain reduction and general well-being improvement in immediate postpartum women attended at a Public Maternity.

Concluding message

Physiotherapy can contribute to the care of women, fast return to pre-pregnancy conditions and prevention of future problems. For future research it is recommended a follow-up evaluation in order to demonstrate the effects of physiotherapy in the late puerperium. The exercise protocol proved to be effective for reducing pain and improving general well-being in postpartum women treated at a Public Maternity

References

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Disclosures

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