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Guided imagery therapy: Alternative intervention for pregnancy induced hypertension

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Abstract
The future depends on what we do in the present - Mahatma Gandhi
A deliberate kind of directed daydreaming, narrated by a soothing voice over relaxing music, it produces a calm state of focused, energized readiness that reduces discomfort while offering emotional support and a feeling of confidence in the body's inherent wisdom.
Guided imagery: more than just relaxation: Guided imagery is an excellent intervention for the unique demands of pregnancy and childbirth, delivering a readymade, complementary therapy for childbirth professionals to include in their tool kit. More than just relaxing, imagery can set the stage for productive, confident labor; it can focus breathing and encourage a powerful alliance with uterine contractions; it can increase a sense of gratitude for the body and the miracle of childbirth; and it can enhance a feeling of connection with the growing baby.
Imagery travels primarily via right brain sensing — perceiving, feeling, apprehending, and motor reactivity, rather than through left brain thinking— judging, analyzing, and deciding. Because of this, and the way that pregnancy and childbirth heighten the functioning of primitive, survival structures of the brain, it is an ideal intervention for pregnancy, labor, and delivery.
Conclusion: A low-cost guided imagery therapy can help to lower stress and blood pressure, enhance an overall sense of emotional well-being, and improve the pregnancy outcomes.

Keywords: guided imagery, PIH, fetal wellbeing, maternal well being

Introduction

Pregnancy induced hypertension

Pregnancy induced hypertension induces dramatic physiological changes in the cardiovascular system like Increases in blood pressure, heart rate, stroke volume and cardiac output. Pathophysiological mechanisms may play a role in activating the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis and the sympathetic-adrenal-medullary (SAM) system that produces glucocorticoid hormones and catecholamines responses to psychological stimuli.

The function of the HPA axis is associated with increases in the levels of plasma glucocorticoid hormones such as cortisol under the control of adreno corticotropic hormone (ACTH). The secretion of ACTH is regulated by corticotropin-releasing hormone (CRH), which is secreted from the hypothalamus and is associated with the regulation of a normal response to stress .In pregnancy placental CRH stimulates maternal pituitary ACTH secretion, which leads to increased cortisol levels as gestation progresses, and results in maternal physiological hypercortisolism.

Even though glucocorticoid hormones physiologically increase by the end of gestation, in normal pregnancies blood pressure is controlled by the homeostatic function of the neuroendocrine systems. Patients with hypertensive disorders of pregnancy show higher levels of mean arterial pressure compared to those with normal pregnancy. The activation of the sympathetic nervous system is observed in both chronic hypertension and gestational hypertension compared with normal pregnancy

Effects of guided imagery therapy in PIH

This simple, subtle practice packs a powerful punch because of the way it can skip around cognition and send healing messages straight into the whole being, by way of primitive, sensory, and emotion-based channels in the brain and nervous system. Imagery travels primarily via right brain sensing-perceiving, feeling, apprehending, and motor reactivity, rather than through left brain thinking-judging, analyzing, and deciding. Because of this, and the way that pregnancy and childbirth heighten the functioning of the brain, it is an ideal intervention for pregnancy induced Hypertension.

Conclusion

A low-cost guided imagery therapy can help to lower stress and blood pressure, enhance an overall sense of emotional well-being, and improve the pregnancy outcomes.

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