

Pregnancy massage reduces prematurity, low birthweight and postpartum depression

Conclusion: Depressed prenatal women who received massage therapy in addition to psychotherapy showed a greater decrease in depression and anxiety levels as well as a greater decrease in cortisol levels.

Field, T., Deed, O., Diego, M., Gualer, A., Sullivan, S., Wilson, D. & Nearing, G. (2009). Benefits of combining massage therapy with group interpersonal psychotherapy in prenatally depressed women. *Journal of Bodywork and Movement Therpies*, 13, 297-303.

Method:

One hundred and twelve pregnant women who were diagnosed depressed were randomly assigned to a group who received group Interpersonal Psychotherapy or to a group who received both group Interpersonal Psychotherapy and massage therapy.

Results:

The data suggested that the group who received psychotherapy plus massage attended more sessions on average, and a greater percentage of that group completed the 6-week program. The group who received both therapies also showed a greater decrease in depression, depressed affect and somatic-vegetative symptom scores on the Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depression Scale, a greater decrease in anxiety scale scores and a greater decrease in cortisol levels. The group therapy process appeared to be effective for both groups as suggested by the increased expression of both positive and negative affect and relatedness during the group therapy sessions.

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