



## Alternative Therapies for Reducing Episiotomy Pain.

*Mrs. Nima V. P<sup>1</sup>, Prof Dr Pradeep VS<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Malwanchal University, Indore

<sup>2</sup>Research Supervisor, Malwanchal University, Indore.

### Introduction

Episiotomy, a surgical incision made in the perineum during childbirth to facilitate the delivery of a baby, is a common procedure performed during vaginal births. Although it's done for various medical reasons, the subsequent pain and discomfort from this incision can be a significant concern for many new mothers. While conventional pain relief methods such as analgesics are widely used, there has been an increasing interest in alternative therapies. This article delves into some of these non-conventional methods that have been employed to alleviate episiotomy pain.

#### 1. Cold Packs

One of the most straightforward and commonly used techniques to reduce post-episiotomy pain is the application of cold packs. Cold helps numb the area, reduce swelling, and provides immediate relief. Immediately after delivery, cold packs can be placed on the perineal area for intervals of 15-20 minutes.

#### 2. Sitz Baths

A sitz bath involves sitting in a shallow tub of warm water. This method can help improve blood flow to the perineal area, promote healing, and offer relief from pain and discomfort. Sitz baths are typically recommended a few days after delivery and can be done several times a day for 10-15 minutes.

#### 3. Aromatherapy

Essential oils have been used for ages to provide relief from various ailments. For episiotomy pain, oils like lavender, chamomile, and frankincense can be diluted with carrier oils and gently massaged onto the area. However, it's crucial to ensure the oils do not come into contact with the stitches and always consult with a healthcare provider before using them.

#### 4. Herbal Compresses

Herbs such as comfrey, calendula, and witch hazel have anti-inflammatory properties that can aid in the healing process. A cloth soaked in an infusion of these herbs can be applied to the affected area to reduce pain and swelling.

#### 5. Acupuncture

Originating in ancient China, acupuncture involves inserting fine needles at specific points on the body to alleviate pain and promote healing. Some studies suggest that acupuncture can be beneficial in reducing postpartum pain, including discomfort from episiotomy.

#### 6. Pelvic Floor Exercises

Though it might sound counterintuitive, gentle pelvic floor exercises can aid in improving blood flow to the area, thus promoting healing. These exercises also help in strengthening the pelvic muscles which can be beneficial in the long run.

#### 7. Homeopathy

Certain homeopathic remedies, such as Arnica Montana, are believed to reduce pain, swelling, and bruising. Other remedies, like Calendula or Hypericum, can be used as creams or ointments applied externally for wound healing. It's essential to consult a homeopathic practitioner for the right remedy and dosage.

#### 8. Biofeedback

Biofeedback is a technique where individuals are trained to improve their health by controlling bodily processes that usually occur involuntarily, such as muscle tension. By understanding and learning to regulate these processes, new mothers can potentially manage and reduce episiotomy pain.

#### 9. Warm Compresses

Similar to the cold pack method, warm compresses can also offer relief. The warmth helps in improving blood circulation, which can promote healing and reduce pain.

## 10. Hydration and Nutrition

Keeping hydrated and consuming a nutrient-rich diet plays a crucial role in postpartum recovery. Drinking plenty of water and eating foods rich in vitamin C, zinc, and protein can support the body's natural healing processes.

## Risks and Considerations

While these alternative therapies can offer relief from episiotomy pain, it's essential to understand that what works for one person might not work for another. Always consult with a healthcare professional before trying any new therapy, especially if there are concerns about potential interactions or side effects.

Moreover, always monitor the episiotomy site for signs of infection or complications, such as increased redness, swelling, pus, or if the pain worsens. If any of these symptoms are observed, seek medical attention immediately.

## Conclusion

Childbirth is a transformative experience, but it can also be accompanied by pain and discomfort, especially if an episiotomy is performed. While conventional pain relief methods are effective, alternative therapies can offer additional solace and support. By combining conventional and alternative methods, new mothers can find the most effective pain relief regimen tailored to their needs, ensuring a smoother postpartum recovery.

## Reference

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2021, April). Complementary, Alternative, or Integrative Health: What's In a Name? National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health. Retrieved October 27, 2020, from <https://www.nccih.nih.gov/>.
2. Birdee GS, Kemper KJ, Rothman R, Gardiner P. Use of complementary and alternative medicine during pregnancy and the postpartum period: an analysis of the national health interview survey. *J Women's Health*. 2014;23(10):1-6. doi:10.1089/jwh.2013.4568.
3. Sukwadee K, Nongyao B, Panwara P. Effect of herbal compresses for maternal breast engorgement at postpartum: a randomized controlled trial. *Breastfeed Med*. 2018;13(5):361-365. doi:10.1089/bfm.2018.0032.
4. Sailo ML, Jagadeesh NS, Ranganathan S, Duraipandian C. Effect of peppermint water on prevention of nipple injury among postnatal mothers subjected to caesarean. *Int J Nurs Educ*. 2018;10(1):43-48. doi:10.5958/0974-9357.2018.00010.7.
5. Wong BB, Chan YH, Leow MQH, Lu Y, Chong YS, Koh SSL, He, HG. Application of cabbage leaves compared to gel packs for mothers with breast engorgement: randomised controlled trial. *Inter J Nurs Stud*. 2018;28(3):92-99. doi:10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2017.08.014.
6. Malekuti J, Mirghafourvand M, Samadi K, Abbasalizadeh F, Khodaei L. Comparison of the effect of myrtus communis herbal and anti-hemorrhoid ointments on the hemorrhoid symptoms and quality of life in postpartum women with grade I and II internal hemorrhoid: a triple-blinded randomized controlled clinical trial. *J Complement Integr Med*. 2019;16(4):1-13. doi:10.1515/jcim-2018-0147.
7. Mohammadi A, Mohammad-Alizadeh, Charandabi S, Mirghafourvand M, Javadzadeh Y, Fardiazar Z, Effati-Daryani F. Effects of cinnamon on perineal pain and healing of episiotomy: a randomized placebo-controlled trial. *J Integr Med*. 2014;12(4):359-366. doi:10.1016/S2095-4964(14)60025-X.
8. Vaziri F, Shiravani M, Najib F, Pourahmad S, Salehi A, Yazdanpanahi Z. Effect of lavender oil aroma in the early hours of postpartum period on maternal pains, fatigue, and mood: a randomized clinical trial. *Prev Med*. 2017;8(1). doi:10.4103/ijpvm.IJPVM\_137\_16.
9. Şolt Kirca A, Kanza Gul D. The effect of acupressure applied to points LV4 and LI4 on perceived acute postpartum perineal pain after vaginal birth with episiotomy: a randomized controlled study. *Arch Gynecol Obstet*. 2020;301(2):473-481. doi:10.1007/s00404-020-05439-z.
10. Akbarzade M, Ghaemmaghami M, Yazdanpanahi Z, Zare N, Azizi A, Mohagheghzadeh A. Comparison of the effect of dry cupping therapy and acupressure at BL23 point on the primiparous women's intensity of postpartum perineal pain: a randomized clinical trial. *Qom Univ Med Sci J*. 2015;8(6):4-6. PMID: 29282415; PMCID: PMC5742668.
11. Gausel AN, Dalen I, Kjærmann I, Malmqvist S, Anderson K, Larsen JP, Økland I. Adding chiropractic treatment to individual rehabilitation for persistent pelvic girdle pain 3 to 6 months after delivery: a pilot randomized trial. *JMPT*. 2019;42(8):601-607. doi:10.1016/j.jmpt.2018.12.006.
12. Kamel DM, Abdel Raouf NA, Tantawy SA. Efficacy of lumbar mobilization on postpartum low back pain in Egyptian females: a randomized control trial. *J Back Musculoskelet Rehabil*. 2016;29(1):55-63. doi:10.3233/BMR-150598.

13. Schwerla F, Rother K, Rother D, Ruetz M, Resch K. Osteopathic manipulative therapy in women with postpartum low back pain and disability: a pragmatic randomized controlled trial. *J Am Osteopath Assoc.* 2015;115(7):416-25.