Midwifery intitated project: Childbirth Massage Program for Normal low risk pregnant women

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- childbirth massage
- non-pharmacological pain relief
- preparation for labor
- role of the partner in labor
- induce relaxation and sleep
- mother friendly

Introduction
Childbirth massage is evidenced to facilitate the positive childbirth experience and minimize stress during labour. It can also help reduce the use of intrapartum pain medications and baby will be more responsive and alert immediately after birth. A childbirth massage class program for both normal low risk women after 36 weeks gestation and their partners was launched in our department on alternate Saturdays from March to December in 2014.

Objectives
1. To provide an alternative informed choice in pain relief methods for women. 2. To give the partner an active role throughout the labor process. 3. To relieve maternal discomfort and promote relaxation. 4. To increase the likelihood of spontaneous vaginal birth, maternal satisfaction.

Methodology
The massage class will be composed of both theory and practice. Breathing, relaxation and massage techniques were taught. One midwife taught 3 pairs of couples each time. It took 3 hours in total. Home practice was encouraged to strengthen their readiness during delivery. Follow up phone survey was arranged after 2 weeks of home practice. 5-point Likert scale was used to assess couples’ responses towards childbirth massage. By the end of phone survey, couples were invited to
verbalize their feelings. Obstetric outcomes were measured by mode of delivery, length of labor and babies’ Apgar score at 5 minutes of life.

Result
68 couples were recruited. 92.5% are nulliparous. 71.4% had spontaneous onset of labor. 71.7% with first stage of labor <=10 hours whereas 90.2% second stage <60 minutes. 76.3% born by normal vaginal delivery. All babies’ Apgar score >=7 at 5 minutes of life. Questionnaires were analyzed as followed: Women=W and partner=P n=68 in each group Women(%) Partner(%) -Enjoyed the massage W=59(86) P=64(93) -Enhanced couple relationship W=65(96)P=65(95) -Relieved backache W=49(71) -Getting easier to sleep W=40(59) -Felt self-empowered P=65(95) Outcome: Childbirth massage program is a midwifery initiated activity which can enhance positive experience for couples. It should be continued as a service in Obstetric department.