A Retrospective Study on the Efficacy of an Early Physiotherapy Intervention Program in the Treatment of Blocked Milk Ducts in Lactating Women

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**Background:**

• prevalence of the breastfeeding rate in Hong Kong has rapidly climbed from 20% in 1992 to 60% in 2002 and 86% in 2014. 
  Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative Hong Kong Association

• Reported rates of mastitis in lactating women from 9.5-33% Leung 2017
Objectives:
• To evaluate the efficacy of an early physiotherapy intervention program on the treatment of blocked ducts in lactating women.
• To evaluate any correlation between number of treatment session and the duration of onset (days) on treatment outcomes.

METHOD:
✧ Offer treatment within 24-48 hours upon recipient of referral

Referral Pathway

Cases seen by Lactation Consultant (LC) → Patients with mastitis/abscess admitted via AED

Examine at Surgical Breast Centre by surgeons & Breast Care Nurse

Surgical intervention/Conservative Management

Treatment by PT for 7 sessions or less

Signs of infection and/or no improvement after 3 sessions of treatment

Yes → Refer back to LC or BCN

No → Discharge
PHYSIOTHERAPY:

- Therapeutic Ultrasound
- Light Therapy
- Lymphatic drainage
- Exercises
- Postural awareness

OUTCOME MEASURES:

- Pain
- Volume of milk expressed
- Number of milk outlet
- Overall satisfactory rate
Results:

- 16 women with blocked milk ducts attended physiotherapy department from Jan-Oct 2016.
- Average age of 32.57 \( \pm \) 3.44 years.
- 5 of them had bilateral involvement.
- Average number of treatment sessions was 7.24.
- Strong positive correlation between duration of onset and number of treatment sessions \((r=0.71, p=0.00)\).
- The mean patient satisfaction level was 82.38\%.
CONCLUSION

• An early physiotherapy intervention program is effective in the treatment of blocked ducts in lactating women.

• A close collaboration within a multidisciplinary team can alleviate the problem of blocked ducts and mastitis timely and efficiently.

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