Complementary and alternative approaches to pain relief during labor

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Abstract

This review evaluated the effect of complementary and alternative medicine on pain during labor with conventional scientific methods using electronic data bases through 2006 were used. Only randomized controlled trials with outcome measures for labor pain were kept for the conclusions. Many studies did not meet the scientific inclusion criteria. According to the randomized control trials, we conclude that for the decrease of labor pain and/or reduction of the need for conventional analgesic methods: (i) There is an efficacy found for acupressure and sterile water blocks. (ii) Most results favored some efficacy for acupuncture and hydrotherapy. (iii) Studies for other complementary or alternative therapies for labor pain control have not shown their effectiveness.
This review evaluated the effect of complementary and alternative medicine on pain during labor with conventional scientific methods using electronic data bases through 2006 were used. Only randomized controlled trials with outcome measures for labor pain were kept for the conclusions. Many studies did not meet the scientific inclusion criteria. According to the randomized control trials, we conclude that for the decrease of labor pain and/or reduction of the need for conventional analgesic methods: (i) There is an efficacy found for acupressure and sterile water blocks. (ii) Most results favo Our outcome measure was pain relief during labor. This is usually measured with a 10 cm visual analogue scale (VAS) which is a sensitive and efficient method for measuring pain. We used difference in means of pre/post intervention VAS changes in the treatment group as compared to the placebo, as the main effect size measure. 