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The effect of abdominal massage on constipation management and quality of life in elderly individuals

Constipation is a common problem in elderly individuals that affecting their quality of life. Constipation is a preventable and manageable problem and pharmacological and nonpharmacological methods are used to solve this problem. This study is a randomized controlled trial with pre-test and post-test, to determine the effect of abdominal massage on constipation management and quality of life in elderly people. In the study conducted in a nursing home in Ankara, 220 elderly individuals were firstly identified with constipation problem using the Rome II constipation diagnosis criteria. Thirty-five elderly individuals with constipation problems, who met the inclusion criteria, were randomly assigned to 17 experiments and 18 control groups. Preliminary test data were collected by applying both descriptive characteristics information form and constipation quality of life scale (CQL). It was massaged to the elderly individuals in the experimental group with gentle movements and light pressure by the investigator 15 minutes a day, and five days a week for eight weeks. No attempt was made to the control group, the daily routines continued. After abdominal massage application, post-test data were collected by applying CQL scale to both groups again. Our results showed that abdominal massage was effective in constipation management ($p < 0.05$). Besides, the difference between the experimental and control groups was statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) in terms of constipation life quality scale post-test scores. The constipation life quality scale subscales of the experiment and control group; the difference between the post-test scores of physical disability ($p < 0.01$), psychosocial discomfort ($p < 0.01$), anxiety ($p < 0.01$) and satisfaction ($p < 0.01$) was found statistically significant. As a conclusion, abdominal massage, as one of the independent nursing initiatives, may be suggested to be used in constipation management.

Biography

Canan Birimoglu Okuyan has obtained her BSc in Department of Nursing from Kafkas University. She subsequently obtained her MSc in Department of Public Health Nursing from Gaziantep University in 2012. She received her PhD in the Department of Public Health Nursing, Gazi University. During PhD, she has studied in the Turku University of Applied Science in Turku/Finland. She worked as a visitor Researcher at the Manchester Metropolitan University in Manchester/UK. She is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Public Health Nursing at Mustafa Kemal University. Her research interests include public health, public health nursing, geriatric and gerontology.

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