

# **Back Massage to Improve Quality of Sleep among Postpartum Women**

*Thesis*

*Submitted For Partial Fulfillment of Master degree  
in Maternity & Gynecological Nursing*

*By*

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## Contents

	<b>Title</b>	<b>Page</b>
1	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
2	<b>Aim of the Study</b>	<b>5</b>
3	<b>Review of Literature:</b>	
	- <b>Chapter I:</b> Physiological and Psychological changes during postpartum Period	<b>6</b>
	- <b>Chapter II:</b> Sleep during postpartum period	<b>25</b>
	- <b>Chapter III:</b> Role of nurse in improving sleep quality in postpartum perio	<b>44</b>
4	<b>Subjects and methods</b>	<b>61</b>
5	<b>Results</b>	<b>74</b>
6	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>91</b>
7	<b>Conclusion &amp; Recommendations</b>	<b>99</b>
8	<b>Summary</b>	<b>101</b>
9	<b>References</b>	<b>104</b>
10	<b>Appendixes</b>	
11	<b>Arabic summary</b>	

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## ***List of Abbreviations***

- AHNA** : American Holistic Nurses Association
- ANA** : American Nurses Association
- CAM** : complementary and alternative medicine
- ESS** : Epworth Sleepiness Scale
- GABA** :  $\gamma$ -aminobutyric acid
- LDT** : Laterodorsal tegmental nucleus
- LGN** : lateral geniculate nucleus
- NANDA** : The North American Nursing Diagnosis Association
- NHLBI** : National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
- NREM** : Non Rapid eye Movement
- NSF** : National Sleep Foundation
- PPT** : Pedunculo pontine tegmental nucleus
- PSQI** : Pittsburgh sleep quality index
- RAS** : Reticular activating system
- REM** : Rapid eye movement
- SPSS** : statistical package of social science

## **List of Tables**

Tables No	Title	page
(1)	Distribution of the study sample according to their general characteristics.	75
(2)	Frequency distribution of the study sample according to Sleep history before pregnancy.	77
(3)	Frequency distribution of the study sample according to Sleep history during late months of pregnancy.	78
(4)	Frequency distribution of the study sample according to Current sleep pattern in postpartum period.	80
(5)	Frequency distribution of the study sample according to variance factors affecting continuity of sleep after delivery.	82
(6)	comparison between the intervention and control group regarding sleep quality before the intervention.	84

<b>Tables No</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>page</b>
(7)	comparison of sleep quality for the Intervention group at initial assessment and second time.	85
(8)	comparison of sleep quality for the Intervention group at second time and third time.	86
(9)	comparison of sleep quality for the control group at initial assessment and second time.	87
(10)	comparison of sleep quality for the control group at second time and third time.	88
(11)	Relationship between general characteristics and sleep quality before the intervention for the intervention group.	89
(12)	Relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and sleep quality before the intervention for the control group.	90

## **List of Figures**

Figure No.	Title	Page
<b><i>Figures of review of literature:</i></b>		
(1)	Involution rate	9
(2)	Lochia saturation	12
(3)	Cervix before & after delivery	12
(4)	Episiotomy types	14
(5)	Physiology of sleep	28
(6)	Sleep stages	31
(7)	phases of sleep cycle	32
(8)	Monophasic & biphasic sleep pattern	35
(9)	Polyphasic sleep pattern	36
(10)	Wrist actigraphy	51
(11)	Types of efflurage	58
<b><i>Figures of result:</i></b>		
(1)	Frequency distribution of the study sample according to mode of delivery.	76



## List of Appendices

Appendix	Title
1	Protocol
2	Tools of data collection
3	Arabic leaflet

## Abstract

The present study **aimed** to evaluate the effect of back massage on improving quality of sleep among postpartum women. **An intervention study** design was used. The study was conducted at the postnatal units at Damanhur Hospital. **A Purposive sample** of sixty women were included in the study, those women were divided into two groups (intervention and control group). Data were collected through using two tools (**Structured interviewing questionnaire sheet** named "back massage to improve quality of sleep among postpartum women" and **Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index**). **The main results of the study were the following:** the most common cause of wake up during late months of pregnancy was voiding in both groups . In addition the most prominent causes of wake up during postpartum period were breast feeding and baby crying for both groups. There was highly significant improvement in sleep quality in Intervention group at initial time, 2<sup>nd</sup> time and 3<sup>rd</sup> time. **Conclusion and recommendations:** the current study concluded that back massage had significantly improved sleep quality among postpartum women as improvement in 3<sup>rd</sup> time was more than 2<sup>nd</sup> time. The following is recommended: Nursing staff should be trained on back massage technique and apply it as a part of routine postpartum care.

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**Key word:** Back massage, sleep quality, postpartum

## Introduction

The postpartum period, also known as the puerperium, it begins with the delivery of the baby and placenta. The end of the postpartum period is less well-defined, but is often considered the six to eight weeks after delivery because the effects of pregnancy on many systems have resolved by this time and these systems have largely returned to their pre- pregnancy state. However, all organ systems do not return to baseline within this period and the return to baseline is not necessarily linear over time. In some studies, women are considered postpartum for as long as 12 months after delivery (*Ravid & Gidoni, 2015*).

Childbirth is one of the happiest events in every woman's life. Women have unique and varied immediate responses after giving birth. Some feel excited, and energetic. Others are exhausted and want to sleep (*Marlo, 2012*).

Sleep is a behavioral state characterized by the temporary suspension of the state of watchful consciousness. Sleep and rest are basic human needs essential to all individual's physical and psychological well-being. About one third of our lives spent in sleeping. It is necessary to health and a sense of well-being. A lack of

sleep will quickly cause irritability, inability to make decisions or follow through with cognitive functions. It will cause hallucinations, dozing off during activities and even throughout the day (*Berry & Milk, 2013*).

A continued lack of sleep can contribute to weight gain, anxiety, depression, lethargy and fatigue. These inevitabilities clearly show the importance of sleep. Although one day of poor sleep is not fatal, it will indeed cause alterations in mood and subsequently affects all daily activities (*Potter, 2014*).

Sleep quality is not directly associated with sleep quantity. Sleep quality is associated with subjective estimates of the ease of sleep onset, sleep maintenance, total sleep time, and early awakening. In addition, restlessness during the night, movement during sleep, anxiety, and tension. Good sleep quality is associated with a wide range of positive outcomes such as better health, less daytime sleepiness, greater wellbeing and better psychological functioning (*Potter, 2014*).

Postpartum women have identified sleep as the primary stressor during the early postpartum period. Postpartum women experience altered sleep patterns that may lead to sleep disturbances. The most common reasons

for sleep disturbances are related to newborn sleep and feeding patterns (*Huang, 2014*).

Sleep disturbances can be managed by medications but due to the side effects of medications on the woman and the newborn, most women seek about alternative therapy such as back massage to solve this problem (*Marlo, 2012*).

Massage provides both physical and emotional wellness. It is considered one of the effective methods used to induce sleep so nurses who are interested in alternative and complementary therapies should learn the right technique of back massage and make it a main part of postpartum care given to women in this period (*Goldstein & Casanelia, 2011*).

### **Justification of the study:**

Sleep in women can be described as a complex dynamic physiological process to restore physical agility and energy that varies with the physiological stages one may experience throughout life. Realizing that sleep disturbances reported among women are highly prevalent, the National Sleep Foundation Poll in 2007 brought this fact to light. In that report nearly three in ten women had a good night's sleep only a few nights per months or less.

Forty six percent of women stated that they had a sleep problem almost every night. 84% of pregnant and post partum women had sleep problems at least a few nights per week (*National Sleep Foundation, 2007*).

Sleep loss is associated with poor attention and decision-making, poor performance on routine tasks, more mistakes, diabetes, obesity, and a host of emotional symptoms like depression, anxiety, mood swings, irritability, anger, frustration, and poor coping skills. At its extreme, sleep deprivation can actually induce psychotic symptoms (*Runquist, 2014*).

New study that is done in Taiwan proved that back massage is effective in improving sleep quality in postpartum period (*Yi-Li Ko, and Hsiu-Jung Lee, 2012*).

Therefore, the researcher suggested the present study because it is mandatory to evaluate the effectiveness of back massage on improving sleep quality in postpartum period to enable new mothers enjoying their life with their babies.

## **Aim of the study**

To evaluate the effect of back massage on improving quality of sleep among postpartum women.

### **Research hypothesis:**

Back massage will improve quality of sleep among postpartum women.