

Effectiveness of the application of therapeutic touch on weight, complications...

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Full Title: Effectiveness of the application of therapeutic touch on weight, complications, and length of hospital stay in preterm newborns attended in a neonatal unit

OBJECTIVE: To determine the effectiveness of therapeutic touch on weight, the presence of postnatal complications, and length of hospital stay in preterm newborns, as well as on parental satisfaction with the care provided. **METHOD:** We performed an experimental study in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit of the Virgen Macarena University Hospital in Seville (Spain). Seventy eight premature neonates were randomly assigned to one of the comparison groups (39 in the control group and 39 in the experimental group). The outcome variables of weight, length of hospital stay, the presence of complications, and parental satisfaction were evaluated. Control variables related to maternal socio-demographic and clinic characteristics were also measured. The intervention was based on the application of therapeutic touch. **RESULTS:** The mean weight in grams was 1,867.80 (SD=149.72) in the experimental group and 1,860 (SD=181.92) in the control group ($t=0.148$; $p=0.883$). Length of hospital stay was 16.82 (SD=6.47) in the experimental group and 20.30 (SD=8.04) in the control group ($t=2.100$; $p=0.039$). Complications developed in 5.3% of the premature neonates in the experimental group and in 20% of those in the control group ($\chi^2=3.78$; $p=0.049$). The odds ratio for developing complications was 1.673 (CI 1.089-2.571). **CONCLUSIONS:** The application of therapeutic touch reduces the length of hospital stay and the presence of complications. Nevertheless, further research in larger samples is required.

Enferm Clin. 2009 Jan-Feb;19(1):11-5. Epub 2009 Feb 6. Domínguez Rosales R, Albar Marín MJ, Tena García B, Ruíz Pérez MT, Garzón Real MJ, Rosado Poveda MA, González Caro E. Hospital Universitario Virgen Macarena, Sevilla, España.

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