



Effect of manual lymph drainage massage and low pressure bandage on pain and shoulder function after mastectomy

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Abstract

Introduction: Shoulder joint pain and dysfunction are common problems associated with breast cancer surgery. These symptoms can be accompanied with long-term physical and psychosocial problems for patients. In this study, the effects of low pressure bandage and manual lymphatic drainage massage on pain and function of the shoulder joint in women after mastectomy was studied.

Methods: 90 patients with radical mastectomy were selected randomly of the oncology center of Imam Khomeini Hospital in Tehran during three years (2008-2011) and allocated in the control, massage and massage+ bandage groups. Lymphatic drainage massage and low pressure multilayer bandage were conducted on a daily basis for 30 days. Function of the shoulder joint and limb pain were assessed by shoulder and pain dysfunction scale (SPDI) before and after the intervention. Non-parametric statistical analyzes were performed with SPSS software.

Results: The mean age of patients was $44/24 \pm 1/66$ years. 81 patients (91%) were married, and 66 (75.8%) had lower education than secondary education. 91.1% were housewives. the most difficult in all 3 groups was lying to affected arm. Wilcoxon test showed decreasing pain in thirtieth day after intervention. It was also found that massage alone or in combination with low pressure bandage reduces the limitation of shoulder motion in patients with radical mastectomy ($P < 0.001$).

Conclusions: Lymphatic drainage massage and low pressure bandage reduce pain and limitation of shoulder function in patients undergoing breast cancer surgery.

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