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Author: Nurcan Uysal



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The effect of abdominal massage administered by caregivers on gastric complications occurring in patients intermittent enteral feeding – a randomised controlled trial

Nurcan Uysaluysalnurcan@gmail.com

Eğitim Mh. Balçova 35660, İzmir/TURKEY

Abstract

Introduction: Gastric intolerance is the main gastrointestinal complication during the course of enteral nutrition in critically ill patients. Abdominal massage is assumed to prevent the development of gastric intolerance by reducing residual gastric volume. This study aimed to analyze the effects of abdominal massage on excess gastric residual volume, abdominal distension, vomiting occurring in patients intermittent enteral feeding.

Methods: Randomized controlled trial was developed and conducted in the neurology and brain surgery units of a university hospital. The sample of the study consisted of a total of 100 patients, selected randomly to receive intervention group (n=50) and control group (n=50). The family caregivers of the patients in the intervention group (n=50) taught abdominal massage by the researcher. Fifteen-minute abdominal massage was administered to the patients in the intervention group twice daily by the caregivers.

Results: Findings demonstrated that 8.0% of the intervention group patients and 34.0% of the control group patients developed high gastric residual volume ($p = .001$). When the first day and last day abdominal circumference measurement results of both groups were compared, abdominal circumference was more in the control group ($p < 0.05$). Vomiting developed in 16.0% of the patients in the control group and in 2.0% of the patients in the intervention group, and the difference between them was found statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).

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