Antenatal hypnosis training and childbirth experience: a randomized controlled trial.

Werner A, Uldbjerg N, Zachariae R, Wu CS, Nohr EA.

Author information: Department of Gynecology and Obstetrics, Aarhus University Hospital Skejby, Aarhus N, Denmark.

Abstract

BACKGROUND:
Childbirth is a demanding event in a woman's life. The aim of this study was to explore whether a brief intervention in the form of an antenatal course in self-hypnosis to ease childbirth could improve the childbirth experience.

METHOD:
In a randomized, controlled, single-blinded trial, 1,222 healthy nulliparous women were allocated to one of three groups during pregnancy: A hypnosis group participating in three 1-hour sessions teaching self-hypnosis to ease childbirth, a relaxation group receiving three 1-hour lessons in various relaxation methods and Mindfulness, and a usual care group receiving ordinary antenatal care only. Wijmas Delivery Expectancy/Experience Questionnaire (W-DEQ) was used to measure the childbirth experience 6 weeks postpartum.

RESULTS:
The intention-to-treat analysis indicated that women in the hypnosis group experienced their childbirth as better compared with the other two groups (mean W-DEQ score of 42.9 in the Hypnosis group, 47.2 in the Relaxation group, and 47.5 in the Care as usual group (p = 0.01)). The tendency toward a better childbirth experience in the hypnosis group was also seen in subgroup analyses for mode of delivery and for levels of fear.

CONCLUSION:
In this large randomized controlled trial, a brief course in self-hypnosis improved the women’s childbirth experience.

© 2013, Copyright the Authors Journal compilation © 2013, Wiley Periodicals, Inc.
PMID: 24344708 [PubMed - in process]