Clinical hypnosis for labour and birth: a consideration.

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Abstract
Labour pain is one of the most important factors in shaping women's experiences of birth. Choice around pharmacological relief can be complex. Clinical hypnosis is a non-pharmacological option which a number of women have chosen to use, often paying privately to do so. Self hypnosis allows women the opportunity to take control of this technique. Research findings relating to the therapy vary; some trials have found positive effects by way of a reduction in use of pharmacological pain relief, oxytocin use and shortened first stage of labour. Inclusion of the therapy as a means to invoke relaxation and counter the effects of stress and anxiety alone may be valid reasons for consideration of its use. This article outlines the framework used in clinical hypnosis and discusses some of the issues relating to the evidence base for it.

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