

## EXPERIENCE REPORT

TREATMENT OF DISORDERS OF BREASTFEEDING BY AURICULOTHERAPY:  
CASE REPORT

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## ABSTRACT

Breast milk has many benefits for both mother and child. In Brazil, children have suckled only until 11 months, then they are completely excluded from that offer. This value is below of the recommendation of the World Health Organization (WHO) which is up to 24 months. Factors for the abandonment of breastfeeding most mentioned are pain and breast engorgement. In this regard, the auricular-therapy corresponds a treatment for physical and mental illnesses, through stimulation of points in the pinna. These points are related with all organs and meridians of systemic acupuncture. The Brazilian Public Health System has shown interest in professionals acupuncturists, as seen on ordinances No. 154 of 2008 and 971 of 2006. This study aimed to analyze the effects of auricular-therapy in complications of lactation. This is a study type case report, with a quantitative approach, where mothers received seeds in auricular points that were in disarray organic. Through a structured interview that assessed variables: pain, reduction of inflammation, treatment time, healing time, milk letdown. After collection, data were recorded in a database and subjected to statistical analysis simple. It was observed that among seven mothers studied, only one had no improvement in her condition.

**Keywords:** Breast Feeding. Auricular-therapy. Treatment.

## INTRODUCTION

Breast milk can ensure the survival of children, primarily those that are born with low birth weight, and particularly act against diarrhea and respiratory diseases, as well as being the ideal food. For the mother, breastfeeding also brings benefits such as returning to the weight before pregnancy, protection against breast cancer and womb<sup>(1,2)</sup>. However, breastfeeding is not an instinctive process only involving psychological, social and cultural aspects<sup>(3)</sup>.

According to the data from the DATASUS, in Brazil only 9.3% of children remain in Exclusive Breastfeeding until the third month of life and 45.5% with complementary feeding until the first year of life. Referring to the Northeast, these same values are at 46.8% and 8.4% respectively<sup>(4)</sup>. The biggest disturbance factor in

the continuity of maternal lactation breast pain can be caused by several factors like breast engorgement, painful nipples, thrush, lactiferous ducts blocking, mastitis, breast abscess, galactoceles and low lactation<sup>(5)</sup>. A review of literature studied traditional non-pharmacological treatments for maintenance of breastfeeding, among them we can find: hot and cold compress, acupuncture, cabbage leaves and breast massage. Acupuncture has been identified as a safe treatment for replacing any other pharmacological or not<sup>(6)</sup>.

Several papers report that the improvement of the production of prolactin and consequent reduction of the symptoms above can be reached through acupuncture sessions<sup>(7,8)</sup>. On literature review, some authors conclude that acupuncture is one of the effective pharmacological methods for protection of breastfeeding<sup>(10)</sup>. There are points in the pinna that have relation with all

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organs and converge in all meridians of systemic acupuncture. These points can be stimulated with the help of specific needles, seeds or crystals. Acupuncture techniques are simple and feasible for its low cost, easy learning, easy implementation and low toxicity<sup>(11)</sup>.

In Brazil, acupuncture is gaining great prominence in the health care scenario introduced as therapeutics in the Unified Health System since the '80. The Ordinance No. 971, May 3, 2006 approving Integrative Health Practices led to a greater response in the resolution and prevention of aggravations, the promotion and recovery of health<sup>(12)</sup>. The practice of acupuncture, in Brazilian municipalities between 1999 and 2007, has had a significant increase, with an additional of 30% of acupuncturists<sup>(13)</sup>.

Being early weaning a factor that leads to various health problems for children's health, the aim of this study is to analyze the effects of the practice of auricular-therapy in the retrogression of breastfeeding complications, in particular, the absence of colostrum and fissure, in women attended in the Association of Child and Maternity Protection (APAMI) in the municipality of Vitória de Santo Antão-PE with difficulty in breastfeeding.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The project was submitted and adopted in the Committee of Ethics of the Health Sciences Center of the Federal University of Pernambuco in response to resolution 196/96, of the National Health Council opinion n° 103,911. Mothers who participated in the research have signed an informed consent.

This is a descriptive study of type case report with quantitative approach. It was used for data collection, interviews, observations, field notes, negotiations with the participant, recordings and documents; what characterizes a systematic investigation of a case being studied which may be an individual, an event, a program or a group<sup>(14)</sup>.

The research was conducted during the months of September and October 2012 in the reference Maternity of the municipality of Vitória de Santo Antão-Association of Maternity and Childhood Protection (APAMI).

The population studied was of women older than 18 years old in puerperium instantly with complaint or difficulty in breast-feeding, in particular low milk production and trauma reconstruction, which were the most frequent complaints of recent mothers who could not breastfeed.

Mustard seeds, seeds, beige bandage 10 cm wide, stylus, tracer for auricular-therapy, simple clamp, antiseptic gel and cotton were used. The data collection instrument was a script of an interview which assessed the perception of the patients on therapy. The variables studied were: pain, reducing inflammation, treatment time, healing time, extra breast milk. Also it was made use of conversations with the women who has recently given birth, to gathering records of the professionals. The quantitative data collected along the mothers were logged and grouped into the database program Microsoft Excel ® 2010 and submitted to simple statistical analysis.

During the period in which they were in maternity, mothers received two visits from auricular-therapeutic, the first a day after childbirth and the second seven days after (since the minimum days in which the woman who has recently given birth was in hospital were eight days) to the results data collection and removal of seeds.

The seeds were applied on the headset and maintained with the help of tape. The points used were: kidney, Shemen, suprarenal for all women, because, in addition to boost body energy, they stimulate the relaxation, relieving tensions. The other points were analyzed according to the indication of pain to the tracer. The mammary glands points, endocrine glands and analgesia, the most sensitive, mammary glands and analgesia were also tested. The applications were made on the laterality of greater nuisance.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

During the intervention period of the research, seven recent mothers agreed to participate, under monitoring for two days during a week, in the first and second day, when it was held the application of auricular-therapy and, seven days after, data collection is made of the results obtained.

The recent mothers were addressed by a psychologist of motherhood clarifying research and method and to see if they agree to participate. To accept, they were forwarded to a room that assure privacy for the realization of

auricular-therapy, lying on a bed, where performed the treatment. In data collection, they were addressed in their own bed to learn of their improvements and sensations.

**Table 01.** Characteristics of mothers of newborns, complaints and results from the auricular-acupuncture, Vitória de Santo Antão, 2012.

Mother	Age	Education	Number of Children	Complaint	Results
01	22	Elementary School complete	02	Absence of colostrum	Presence of colostrum Pain reduction Relaxation
02	25	High School complete	01	Absence of colostrum	Extra milk Relaxation
03	26	High School complete	01	Fissure	Pain reduction Bleeding reduction Relaxation
04	23	High School incomplete	01	Fissure	Relaxation Healing of fissures
05	19	Fundamental incomplete	01	Little milk	Increase milk production
06	21	High School incomplete	01	Little milk	Increase milk production
07	19	High School incomplete	01	Fissure	No results reported

Of the seven cases, six (n=6) 90% were mothers for the first time, and 80% (n = 5) were over 21 years old. All were in the puerperium. As for the start time of results 57.1% (n = 4) were three days, and 42.9% (n = 3) less than three days, these data were collected in conversations with the recent mothers in the meeting during seventh day. In relation to the age group of mothers, it ranged from 19 and 26 years old.

These data are in line with those presented in a case study<sup>(15)</sup> with a patient who presented little volume of milk during lactation and after systemic acupuncture it was observed the increase in flow. In England, it was proven the production of galactorrhea from acupuncture and evidenced the production of oxytocin and prolactin<sup>(16)</sup>. A randomized study, carried out in that place, also came to the positive results of improvement of hypogalactia from the auricular-therapy<sup>(17)</sup>. In research conducted by Yu Zhou, with the control group of women in a few moments before the birth, an auricular-therapy was held, thus, it was concluded that the ear can be the most effective method for the promotion of breastfeeding in recent mothers<sup>(18)</sup>.

In relation to the mother which featured mammary fissure (number four-04), according to her, the total healing occurred in two (02) days after use of the therapy. In the study (Pereira and Neves), it was verified an average

time of healing of eleven and fourteen days, through the conventional practice of dampening the nipple with her own milk and fifteen minute exposure to the sun and just moisten the nipple with her own milk, respectively, including also indicated by the Ministry of health<sup>(19)</sup>.

In return for evaluation of the results, the surveyed were questioned in relation to its general condition and if they had perceived improvement. The result "relaxation", which is observed in activities related to acupuncture, was quoted in 42.86% (n=03) of the interviewed. Since 85.71% (n =06) mothers are mothers for the first time and their lack of experience may be the main factor for the non "going down" of the milk and the pain. Thus, achieving the relaxation of the mothers, can facilitate the process of breastfeeding.

All mothers studied were in exclusive breastfeeding. Only one did not mention her result, however also did not submit any adverse result, all other have reported an effect of "well-being", which may be related with the Auricular-therapy. It was not reported any kind of discomfort and the application of seed not limited in any activity.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Integrative practices are most closely connected with the completeness between health

services and care to the patient. This principle in practice constitutes a great biomedical challenge in the face of its vision focused only on the disease and its fragmentation in specialties, requiring multidisciplinary teams and multiprofessional to conquest of completeness<sup>(20)</sup>.

Considering that breast milk is the only food of the newborn, we understand that the

auricular-therapy, as well as the quiroacupuncture and systemic acupuncture may be more stimulated and recognized throughout the Brazilian territory. Low cost in comparison with allopathic treatments, the absence of adverse effects or side effects and easy application convert treatments in promising strategies to assist the mothers with difficulties in the process of breastfeeding.

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## TRATAMENTO DE TRANSTORNOS DA AMAMENTAÇÃO POR AURICULOTERAPIA: RELATO DE CASO

### RESUMO

O leite materno possui inúmeros benefícios para mãe e para o filho. No Brasil, as crianças têm mamado apenas até os 11 meses, sendo depois excluída totalmente essa oferta. Este valor está bem abaixo da recomendação da Organização Mundial de Saúde (OMS) que é até os 24 meses. Os fatores para o abandono mais citados são a dor e o ingurgitamento mamário. A propósito disso, a auriculoterapia constitui um tratamento para enfermidades físicas e mentais, através de estímulo de pontos do pavilhão auricular. Estes pontos possuem relação com todos os órgãos e meridianos de acupuntura sistêmica. O Sistema Público de Saúde Brasileiro tem mostrado interesse por profissionais acupunturistas, conforme as Portarias nº154 de 2008 e 971 de 2006. O presente trabalho objetivou analisar os efeitos da acupuntura auricular nas complicações da lactação. Um estudo do tipo relato de caso, com abordagem quantitativa, trata de mães que receberam sementes em pontos auriculares que estavam em desordem energética. Dados coletados: dor, redução da inflamação, tempo de tratamento, tempo de cicatrização, apoadura. Após a coleta, as informações foram registradas em banco de dados e submetidas à análise estatística simples. Observou-se que, das sete puérperas estudadas, apenas uma não apresentou melhora.

**Palavras-chave:** Aleitamento materno. Auriculoterapia. Tratamento.

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## TRATAMIENTO DE LOS TRASTORNOS DE LA LACTANCIA MATERNA POR AURICULOTERAPIA: RELATO DE UN CASO

### RESUMEN

La leche materna tiene muchos beneficios para la madre y el niño. En Brasil, los niños maman sólo hasta 11 meses siendo después excluida por completo esa oferta. Este valor está muy por debajo de la recomendación de la Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS), que es de hasta 24 meses. Entre los factores más comunes por los que las madres evitan la etapa de amamantar están; el dolor y la ingurgitación mamaria. Así, la auriculoterapia es un tratamiento para enfermedades físicas y mentales, a través de estímulos de puntos de la pinna. Estos puntos tienen una relación con todos los órganos y meridianos de acupuntura sistémica. El Sistema Público de Salud Brasileño ha mostrado su interés por los profesionales acupunturistas visto las ordenanzas publicadas nº 154 de 2008 y 971 de 2006. Este estudio tuvo como objetivo evaluar los efectos de la acupuntura auricular en las complicaciones del amamantamiento. Un estudio de tipo reporte de caso, con enfoque cuantitativo, donde las madres recibieron semillas en puntos auriculares que estaban en trastorno energético. A través de una entrevista estructurada que se evaluaron las variables: dolor, reducción de la inflamación, tiempo de tratamiento, tiempo de curación, bajada de la leche. Después de la colección, los datos fueron registrados en una base de datos y se sometieron a análisis estadísticos simples. Se señaló que de las siete puérperas estudiadas sólo una no tuvo ninguna mejoría.

**Palabras clave:** Lactancia Materna. Auriculoterapia. Tratamiento.

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