

## EFFECT OF BREAST FEEDING AND MENSTRUAL STATUS ON SYMPTOMS OF PELVIC FLOOR DISORDERS IN NULLIPAROUS WOMEN AFTER THEIR FIRST DELIVERY

### Hypothesis / aims of study

The aim of the study was to evaluate if there is relationship between breast feeding or menstrual status and postpartum pelvic floor disorder symptoms in nulliparous women after their first delivery.

### Study design, materials and methods

This is a retrospective study reviewing the medical notes of a cohort of nulliparous women who were recruited for a prospective study on pelvic floor during and after the first pregnancy of the women.(1,2,3) All women did not have symptoms of pelvic floor disorders before the pregnancy. Their medical notes were reviewed for their breast feeding status and menstrual status at 8 weeks, 6 months and 12 months after their delivery. Their symptoms of stress urinary incontinence (SUI), urge urinary incontinence (UUI), fecal incontinence (FI) and pelvic organ prolapse (POP) symptoms have been explored with Pelvic Floor Distress Inventory.(3)

### Results

In all, 328 women had completed the study till one year after delivery, however, information on both the breast feeding and menstrual status were only available in 318 (97%), 305 (93%) and 298 (91%) women at 8 weeks, 6 months and 12 months, respectively, after delivery. There was no statistical significant relationship between breast feeding and the symptoms of SUI or UUI. There were more women whose menstruation had not yet returned reported SUI at 8 weeks after delivery ( $P = 0.038$ ). However, there was no relationship between menstrual status and SUI or UUI at 6 and 12 months after delivery. There were also no statistical significant relationship between breast feeding or menstrual status and FI or POP symptoms.

### Interpretation of results

There was no statistical significant relationship between breast feeding and the symptoms of pelvic floor disorders. There was also no statistical significant relationship between menstrual status and symptoms of pelvic floor disorder except more women reported SUI if their menstruations have not yet returned at 8 weeks after delivery.

### Concluding message

Breast feeding did not increase the postpartum symptoms of pelvic floor disorders of women. Although more women reported SUI if their menstruations have not yet returned at 8 weeks after delivery, menstrual status did not increase the postpartum symptoms of pelvic floor disorders of women up to one year after delivery.

Table 1. Relationship of breast feeding or menstrual status and symptoms of urinary incontinence in nulliparous women

	SUI	No SUI	P-value	UUI	No UUI	P-value
<b>PN 8 weeks (N = 318)</b>						
Breast feeding	28 (17.3%)	134 (82.7%)	0.193	12 (9.7%)	112 (90.3%)	0.493
Breast feeding just stopped	3 (9.4%)	29 (90.6%)		1 (3.1%)	31 (96.9%)	
No breast feeding	28 (22.6%)	96 (77.4%)		14 (8.6%)	148 (91.4%)	
Menses not yet returned	43 (22.2%)	151 (77.8%)	0.038	16 (8.2%)	178 (91.8%)	0.846
Menses returned	16 (12.9%)	108 (87.1%)		11 (8.9%)	113 (91.1%)	
<b>PN 6 months (N = 305)</b>						
Breast feeding	18 (31.6%)	39 (68.4%)	0.052	4 (7.0%)	53 (93.0%)	0.306
No breast feeding	49 (19.8%)	199 (80.2%)		10 (4.0%)	238 (96.0%)	
Menses not yet returned	11 (26.2%)	31 (73.8%)	0.477	13 (4.9%)	250 (95.1%)	0.701
Menses returned	56 (21.3%)	207 (78.7%)		1 (2.4%)	41 (97.6%)	
<b>PN 12 months (N = 298)</b>						
Breast feeding	1 (11.1%)	8 (88.9%)	0.305	0 (0%)	9 (100%)	1.0
No breast feeding	76 (26.3%)	213 (73.7%)		23 (8.0%)	266 (92.0%)	
Menses not yet returned	0	4 (100%)	0.576	0 (0%)	4 (100%)	1.0
Menses returned	77 (26.2%)	217 (73.8%)		23 (7.8%)	271 (92.2%)	

Breast feeding just stopped meant breast feeding stopped within 2 weeks of consultation

### References

1. Chan SS, Cheung RY, Yiu KW, et al. Pelvic floor biometry of Chinese primiparous women one year after delivery: a prospective observational study. *Ultrasound Obstet Gynecol* 2014;43:466-474.
2. Chan SS, Cheung RY, Yiu KW, et al. Pelvic floor biometry during first singleton pregnancy and the relationship with symptoms of pelvic floor disorders: a prospective observational study. *BJOG*
3. Chan SS, Cheung RY, Yiu KW, et al. Prevalence of urinary and fecal incontinence in Chinese women during and after first pregnancy. *Int Urogynecol J* 2013;24:1473-1480.

Disclosures

**Funding:** Health and Health Services Research Fund (HHSRF) **Clinical Trial:** No **Subjects:** HUMAN **Ethics Committee:** Joint Chinese University of Hong Kong - New Territories East Cluster Clinical Research Ethics Committee **Helsinki:** Yes **Informed Consent:** Yes