

APPROCHE POSTURO-RESPIRATOIRE (A.P.O.R.®) METHOD IN THE MANAGEMENT OF DIASTASIS OF RECTUS ABDOMINIS MUSCLE AND PELVIC ORGAN PROLAPSE AFTER DELIVERY.

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INTRODUCTION

Diastasis of the rectus abdominis muscle (DRAM), defined as an impairment characterized by a midline separation of the rectus abdominis muscle along the linea alba frequently occurs during and after pregnancy; **DRAM can weaken abdominal and pelvic floor muscles**, reported to function synergistically, such that each muscle group enhances the effectiveness of the other during contraction. The purpose of the present study was to assess **the effectiveness of an exercise proposed for DRAM** as an exercise for “in-ward” of the pelvic muscles.

RESULTS

Values of inter-recti distance (IRD) measured with ultrasound (R.U.S.I., Rehabilitative Ultrasound Imaging, fig. 1) ranged from 2.7 to 3.8 cm. at 2.5 cm above the upper margin of the umbilical ring. **The inter-rectus distance was significantly lower during voluntary contraction of the pelvic floor and associated contraction of the trans versus abdominis muscle during the exhalation** compared with rest- 2.5 (SD 0.71) cm. vs 3.12 (SD 0.86) cm.; **the same exercise, in all women, caused the elevation of pelvic floor muscles**, confirmed by observation of lifting movement of the bladder base.



Fig. 1. Ultrasound images showing the medial ends of the right and left rectus abdominis muscles in cross section



Fig. 2 – 3. Two exercises with voluntary contraction of the pelvic floor and associated contraction of the trans versus abdominis muscle during the exhalation according to the Approche Posturo-Respiratoire Method®

INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

Soon after delivery DRAM and pelvic floor muscles weakness frequently coexist. It's important to avoid exercises that increase intra-abdominal pressure and can worsen the pelvic floor muscles weakness with an increase risk of urinary tract dysfunctions and pelvic organ prolapse: increased intra-abdominal pressure due to contraction of the diaphragm and abdominal muscles directly opposes the correct “in-ward” movement during pelvic floor muscles contraction.

CONCLUDING MESSAGE

Voluntary contraction of the pelvic floor and associated contraction of the trans versus abdominis muscle during the exhalation (fig. 2 – 3) according to the Approche Posturo-Respiratoire Method® have been proven effective under ultrasound control to achieve both goals: improvement of DRAM and “in-ward” of pelvic floor muscles.

References

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