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.

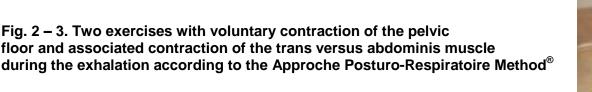
RESULTS

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





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 increate 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 pelvis floor muscles.

References

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