



Centre for Clinical Effectiveness

Enhancing patient outcomes through clinical application of the best available evidence

EVIDENCE CENTRE
CRITICAL APPRAISAL
Series 2002: Therapy

Calendula for perineal healing following childbirth

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SUMMARY STATEMENT

Disclaimer - please refer to Appendix 1 for information.

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Publication of materials – please use the following format when citing this article:

Bernath, V. (2002). Calendula for perineal healing following childbirth. [Online]. Available from <http://www.med.monash.edu.au/healthservices/cce>

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REQUEST

Is calendula effective in promoting perineal healing in women following childbirth?

REQUESTED BY

Fiona Brown, MAS, Birth Centre, Women's and Children's Health, Monash Medical Centre, Moorabbin.

METHODOLOGY

Search Strategy

The Centre for Clinical Effectiveness defines the 'best available evidence' as that research we can identify that is least susceptible to bias. We determine this according to pre-defined National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC, 2000) criteria (see Appendix 1).

First, we search for systematic reviews, evidence based clinical practice guidelines, health technology assessments and randomised controlled trials. If we identify sound, relevant material of this type, the search stops. Otherwise, our search strategy broadens to include studies that are more prone to bias, less generalisable or have other methodological difficulties. We include case-control and longitudinal cohort studies in our critical appraisal reports. While we cite observational and case series studies, and narrative reviews and consensus statements, in our reports we do not critically appraise them. Such studies can produce accurate results but they are generally too prone to bias to allow determination of their validity beyond their immediate setting.

Details of Evidence Request

Patients (Subjects): Women following childbirth

Intervention: Use of calendula infusion or calendula ointment

Comparisons: No use of calendula, use of other oils

Outcomes: Rate of perineal healing, level of perineal discomfort

Search terms

(see Appendix 2 for exact search strategy)

Patient (Subject): perineum, perineal, episiotomy, childbirth, child birth, birth

Intervention: calendula, marigold, tagetes patula

Resources Searched

We searched the following databases:

Australasian Medical Index (INFORMIT)- December 2001

Biological Abstracts (OVID)- 1980 to December 2001

CINAHL (OVID)- 1982 to December Week 2 2000

Cochrane Controlled Trials Register (CCTR, OVID)- 4th Quarter 2001

Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (OVID)- 4th Quarter 2001

Current Contents (OVID)- 1993 Week 26 to 2002 Week 04

Database of Abstracts of Reviews of Effectiveness (OVID)- 4th Quarter 2001

Medline (OVID)- 1966 to January Week 1 2002

PREMEDLINE (OVID)- January 21, 2002

Refinements, Searching & Reporting Constraints

Our search was performed on 22 January 2002.

RESULTS

From our sources we identified 1 article addressing the use of calendula extract after childbirth. This article has not been appraised as it concerns childbirth with caesarean section, not vaginal birth.

Based on our refinements, searching and reporting constraints we are reasonably confident that this represents the most relevant findings published to date.

REFERENCES

ARTICLE NOT CRITICALLY APPRAISED

Not vaginal birth

Lavagna SM, Secci D, Chimenti P, Bonsignore L, Ottaviani A & Bizzarri B (2001). Efficacy of Hypericum and Calendula oils in the epithelial reconstruction of surgical wounds in childbirth with caesarean section. *Farmaco* 56: 451-453.

APPENDIX 1

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Levels Of Evidence

Based on "How to use the evidence: assessment and application of scientific evidence" (National Health & Medical Research Council, Canberra, 2000):

Level I Evidence obtained from a systematic review (or meta-analysis) of all relevant randomised controlled trials.

Level II Evidence obtained from at least one randomised controlled trial.

- Level III
- 1 Evidence obtained from pseudo-randomised controlled trials (alternate allocation or some other method).
 - 2 Evidence obtained from comparative studies (including systematic reviews of such studies) with concurrent controls and allocation not randomised, cohort studies, case control studies or interrupted time series with a control group.
 - 3 Evidence obtained from comparative studies with historical control, two or more single-arm studies or interrupted time series without a parallel control group.

Level IV Evidence obtained from case series, either post-test or pretest/post-test.

APPENDIX 2

Search strategy

	Search terms for Biological Abstracts, CINAHL, Cochrane Database, CCTR, Current Contents, DARE, MEDLINE, PREMEDLINE
1	calendula.mp
2	marigold.mp
3	tagetes patula.mp
4	or/1-3
5	perine\$.mp
6	childbirth.mp
7	child birth.mp
8	birth.mp
9	or/6-8
10	episiotomy.mp
11	4 and 5
12	4 and 9
13	4 and 10
14	11 or 12 or 13