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EXERCISE AS TREATMENT FOR DEPRESSION IN PREGNANT WOMEN WITH GESTATIONAL DIABETES MELLITUS

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Background: Prevalence of depression is higher in women with gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) than in uncomplicated pregnancies. Exercise is part of the management of both depression and GDM.

Aim: The aim of this randomized control trial is to measure the prevalence of antenatal depression in women diagnosed with GDM, who exercised systematically.

Methods: Thirty-four pregnant women with GDM, attending a Clinic of Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders, participated. Twenty-one women were randomly engaged in an 6-8 week program of aerobic exercise, 3-4 times per week and thirteen women were randomly assigned not to participate in an exercise program. Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) was used to measure depression. The questionnaires were completed twice, at 26-30 weeks of gestation and 37-38 weeks.

Findings: There was no significant difference in the BDI at week 26-30, between "Exercise" and "Advice" groups (9.9 ± 4.8 vs. 9.3 ± 4.7 $p=0.738$); on the contrary, there was significant difference at week 37-38 (8.7 ± 3.9 vs. 11.9 ± 3.6 , respectively, $p=0.015$). In addition, there was significant

decrease in the "Exercise" group between the two appliances of the questionnaire (9.9 ± 4.8 vs. 8.7 ± 3.9 , $p=0.008$), as well as significant increase in the "Advice" group (9.3 ± 4.7 vs. 11.9 ± 3.6 , $p=0.025$).

Conclusions: Participating in an aerobic exercise program has a protective role in the prevention of depression in women with GDM. Health care professionals should encourage women with GDM to include exercise as a part of their treatment plan.

Biography

Eleftheria Taousani graduated from Midwifery Department at the Alexander Technological Educational Institute of Thessaloniki (ATEITH) in 1991. She obtained her second Degree in Nursing from the University of Missouri-Columbia (USA) in 1996. She completed her master thesis in the Department of Physical Education and Sport Science in Human Performance and Health. She is currently a Doctoral candidate- Unit of Reproductive Endocrinology, First Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at ATEITH. She is also a Lecturer in the Midwifery Department at the same institute. Her scientific interests are psychoprophylaxis, prenatal and postnatal psychology and exercise during pregnancy and postpartum and gestational diabetes mellitus.

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