

Healing Ways for Postpartum Woes

The Use of CAM Therapies

Christina Gutierrez NDLM

Ground Floor Health PLLC
6300 9th Ave NE, Ste100
Seattle WA 98115

My background

- Trained at Bastyr University, Kenmore WA
- In practice since 2004
- General family medicine with focus on women's health, midwifery, and pediatrics

Personal Approach

- Lowest level of intervention
- First do no harm
- Treat early
- Get results :)

When is postpartum?

- Begins at third stage
- Ends when?
 - 6 weeks
 - College?

Who needs treatment?

- Everyone!
 - MOM
 - BABY
 - DAD

Maternal Postpartum Issues

- Anemia
- Low milk supply
- Mastitis
- Baby blues--->Depression
- Perineal injury
- Surgery

Newborn Postpartum Issues

- Thrush
- Diaper rash
- Colic

Anemia

- Prevention is the key, but what if a hemorrhage?
 - Placental encapsulation?
 - Postpartum Tea
 - Yellow dock, Alfalfa, Oat, Nettle
 - Consider chamomile, lemon balm, passionflower
 - 2-4 cups per day, 1 heaping tablespoon per cup
 - Keep taking prenatal vitamin

Low Milk Supply

- Get in bed and Nurse!
- Botanical treatments
 - Galega officinalis, Goat's Rue:
 - Alcohol extract 1:2, 1:5: 15-30 drops 1-4 times a day
 - Trigonella foenum-graecum, Fenugreek:
 - Solid extract capsules 50 mg 4-6 times a day
 - Silybum marianum, Milk thistle:
 - Alcohol extract 1:5: 30 drops 3-4 times a day
- Acupuncture
 - Addresses underlying causes of low milk supply

Mastitis

- Get in bed and Nurse!
- Homeopathic Remedies: First line at First Sign.
 - Phytolacca decandra-breast unbearably sore, cries when breastfeeding
 - Belladonna-breast bright red, swollen, mildly tender
 - Silica-stone like breast with blocked duct and decreased milk production
 - Use 30C potency, take 2-4 pellets every 15-30 minutes as needed

Mastitis

- If Blocked ducts are the issue:
 - Ultrasound: 2 watts/cm²
 - Two treatments 10 minutes each
 - Black tea bags or cabbage leaves
 - Astringent, draws out plugs, decreases inflammation
 - Soy lecithin: 1 gram a four times a day, granules
 - Preventative, anecdotal
- If candida (yeast) is the issue:
 - Homeopathic Borax for mom and baby
 - Baking soda poultice 2-4 times a day
 - Nystatin powder: 100,000 units/gram

Perineal Lacerations

- Sitz baths
 - Start at 48 hours postpartum
 - Can use a variety of herbs, hot or cold depending on preference
 - Chamomile, Yarrow, Witchhazel, Comfrey, Uva Ursi, Marshmallow, Calendula to name a few
 - Take 1/2 cup dried herbs per quart water, steep for 10 minutes, use immediately or store in refrigerator
 - Homeopathic remedies
 - Calendula 30C
 - Topical and oral, when pain is out of proportion to injury
 - Hypericum 30C
 - Helpful for episiotomy, 3rd degree lacerations with more extensive nerve damage

Traumatic Delivery

- Long labors and/or prolonged 2nd Stage
 - Homeopathic Arnica
 - Woman feels sore, bruised all over, muscle pain
 - Can use oral pellets or gel/cream to be applied topically
- C-section
 - Homeopathic Arnica and Bellis perennis 30C: 2-4 pellets every hour for the first 24 hours, rotating remedy

Baby Blues/Depression

- Evaluate Evaluate Evaluate
- Treat appropriately for each family
- Nutritional
 - Vitamin D3: 6,000-8,000 IU per day
 - B-vitamins: a good B complex twice a day
 - Omega 3 fatty acids: EPA/DHA 1500 mg a day
 - Protein: at least 70 grams a day

Baby Blues/Depression

- Flower essences/remedies
 - Bach remedies most common
 - Rescue Remedy-general use for anxiety
 - Elm-overwhelmed, feels inadequate for mothering
 - Mustard-sudden onset grief/gloom with no connection
 - Mimulus-fear of mothering, insomnia from anxiety
 - Star of Bethlehem-traumatic delivery, grief, loss
- Choose based on individual characteristics

Baby Blues/Depression

- Homeopathic remedies
 - Sepia-indifferent, desires being alone, exhausted
 - Pulsatilla-after grief, weeping constantly, cannot accomplish tasks
 - Staphysagria-anger, resentful
 - Natrum muriaticum-disappointed, resents partner, avoids duties
- Again choose based on individual picture
- Give 30C-200C based on vitality
- Dose 1-3 times a day as indicated

Thrush/Diaper Candidiasis

- Usually these two go hand in hand
- Need to knock out yeast and encourage healthy flora
- Probiotics
 - Give to mom and baby, find formulation that is age specific
 - Give 2 times a day minimum
- Homeopathic Borax 30C
 - child will cry from pain of nursing
 - Mother has intense pain in breast, worse at end of feed

Thrush/Diaper Candidiasis

- Baking soda rinse
 - Use in place of wipes for diaper area
 - Swab gums and cheeks in mouth
 - Rinse nipple area after each feed
- Gentian Violet-treat mouth and nipples
- Nystatin
 - Powder for mom, oral suspension for baby

Colic

- Eliminate food sensitivities/allergies in mom and baby
 - This can be extensive, be careful not to limit mom's diet too much
- Botanical recommendations
 - Fennel, Anise, Ginger in tea form for mother: 2-4 cups a day
- Craniosacral therapy for baby
 - Corrects structural integrity, soothes nervous system

Mastitis and Low Milk Supply Case Study #1

- 33 year old G3P2
- 6 weeks postpartum, returning to work 2 days a week
- Family bed, breastfeeds on demand, thriving baby boy
- Plans on pumping at work

Mastitis and Low Milk Supply Case Study #1

- 1st week back, 10 hour days, pumped every 3-4 hours, getting 2-4 ounces per breast
- 2nd week back, tired, stressed, right breast decreases output to 1-2 ounces, left breast output maintained
- Mom pages, breast hard, mildly tender, cannot express milk (hand or pump) baby very irritable at breast

Mastitis and Low Milk Supply Case Study #1

- Treatment plan:
 - Nurse every 2 hours, start with affected breast, apply heat prior to nursing
 - Homeopathic Silica 30C
 - 2-4 pellets every hour for 4 hours then four times a day till breast softens
 - Decrease stress, hydrate, eat well

Mastitis and Low Milk Supply Case Study #1

- Next day
 - Hardness resolved, baby still irritable at breast
 - Mom noted plug coming from nipple, was able to pull it out
- Next week
 - Recurrence of mastitis/blocked duct, started treatment plan
 - New symptom: fever

Mastitis and Low Milk Supply Case Study #1

- After 24 hours breast is softened
 - Gave Silica 200C
 - Fever resolves
- Baby still irritable at affected breast
 - Pumping getting less than one ounce
 - Mom notes decreased size of breast

Mastitis and Low Milk Supply Case Study #1

- Treatment-Increase milk production
 - Gave tincture of Goat's Rue and Milk Thistle
 - 60 drops four times a day for 1 day then 30 drops 2-3 times a day from then on
 - After first week milk supply increased to 2 ounce output from affected breast
 - After second week breast back to pre-mastitis output
- Patient switched to capsule formula for maintenance
 - 1 capsule twice daily

Postpartum Depression Case Study #2

- 29 year old G3P3, newborn, 3 year old, 5 year old
- Student and stay at home mom
- Presents to office, concerned she is depressed
- Primary symptoms
 - Apathy
 - Avoids interaction with children
 - Feels overwhelmed
 - Guilty feelings

Postpartum Depression Case Study #2

- Denies no change in ADL
- Screened in office for postpartum depression risk factors
- Very supportive family, friends network
- Not sleeping well, wakes frequently in night unable to fall back asleep

Postpartum Depression Case Study #2

- Treatment plan
 - Screen for anemia, hypothyroidism, Vitamin D deficiency
 - Bach Flower Remedy
 - Elm and Mimulus
 - Take 5-10 drops three times a day and acutely as needed
 - Vitamin D-6000 IU per day
 - Omega 3 fatty acids- 2000 mg per day
 - "Self time"

Postpartum Depression Case Study #2

- Follow-up three days
 - Overall improvement in apathy
 - Not feeling as overwhelmed
 - Desires to exercise and feed self desires
- Nat mur 30C
 - 2-4 pellets at bedtime for 1 week
- Follow-up in 1 week
 - Much better, using flower remedy once every few days, enjoying life, finding groove or routine with family

Thank you for attending!

- Questions or comments?

Resources

- Homeopathic Medicines for Pregnancy and Childbirth. Richard Moskowitz. North Atlantic Books, 1992.
- Homeopathy for Midwives. Barbara Geraghty. Churchill Livingstone, 1997.
- Pocket Guide to Bach Flower Essences. Rachelle Hasnas. Crossing Press, 1997.
- Bach Flower Therapy: Theory and Practice. Mechthild Scheffer. Healing Arts Press, 1988.