Post-dates clinic, Use of complementary therapies for prolonged pregnancy guideline (GL1139)

Approval

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approval Group</th>
<th>Job Title, Chair of Committee</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maternity &amp; Children’s Services Clinical Governance Committee</td>
<td>Chair, Maternity Clinical Governance Committee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Change History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Author, job title</th>
<th>Reason</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>Feb 2019</td>
<td>Julie Hunter, Midwife</td>
<td>Trust requirement for trial of new clinic</td>
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</tbody>
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To be read in conjunction with

- GL1085: Aromatherapy use in labour care
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1.0 Purpose
To enable midwives who have received appropriate and formal training specific to the use of acupressure and aromatherapy for post-dates pregnancies to partake in provision of a complementary therapy clinic offering these services to women booked to deliver at Royal Berkshire Foundation Trust who have a prolonged pregnancy. This provides women with additional choices to help increase likelihood of spontaneous onset of labour prior to induction, or a more favourable cervix at the start of a formal induction process.

2.0 Overview
An increasing appetite for complementary therapies has been recognised within maternity patients, with up to 87% of women reporting the use of during their pregnancies (Hall, 2011). Positive reactions from midwives (Levett, 2016), maternal drive and an overall need to optimise opportunities to normalise birth. Inductions can be costly and lengthy processes, with maternal satisfaction greatly impacted (Shetty, 2005). Use of complementary therapies is largely congruent with maternal beliefs and desire to exercise control, choice and holistic approach to their care.

Acupressure is focused application of pressure on specific points relating to meridians or ‘energy channels’ in the body. A Cochrane review (Smith et al 2017) suggests that readiness of the cervix for labour may be improved with these techniques.

Aromatherapy is a complementary therapy which uses highly concentrated essential oils that have been extracted from various parts of different plants. Essential oils are used for their therapeutic properties. The properties of these oils are harnessed for their pharmacological, psychological and emotional benefits including reduction of stress hormones (cortisol’s) that may inhibit the spontaneous onset of labour. The oils can be applied in a variety of ways, during the post-dates clinic this will only be topically via massage using 3% pre-mixed blend in a grape seed carrier oil and subsequent inhalation of the natural aromas of the oils.

3.0 Training and Education
The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC, 2008; NMC, 2010) permits trained midwives to administer complementary therapies as part of their normal practice if it is in the best interest of the mother and with her full consent (NMC, 2008). Midwives must be able to justify their actions in relation to complementary therapies, using all the available contemporary evidence, and should not use these therapies at the expense of normal midwifery care priorities. In accordance with the NMC, midwives must produce documentary evidence of adequate and appropriate training and education. This prepares them to practise the principles of the complementary therapy and apply them to the pregnant woman, within the institutional setting and
whilst in the employment of the Trust. It is not essential for midwives to be fully qualified practitioners of a therapy, so long as they have undertaken training which relates to the use of selected techniques or therapies to midwifery practice.

4.0 Inclusion criteria

The following women will be invited to take part in the post dates complementary therapies clinic. Adherence to the initial assessment questionnaire and careful attention to ensure inclusion criteria is met. Informed consent must be obtained from the woman, including the right to withdraw, and appropriately documented.

Primiparous women from 40 weeks or multiparous women from 41 weeks

Women participating in post-dates clinic must:
- Be experiencing a healthy uncomplicated pregnancy
- Have no underlying health conditions.
- With no obstetric concerns for mother or baby
- Have a normally situated placenta
- Growth of baby must be within normal limits
- Have had no previous adverse reaction to aromatherapy oils

5.0 Exclusion criteria

Unfortunately not all women will be eligible to take part in this clinic. The following are a list of women for whom this clinic is not appropriate. In addition to this a withdrawal of consent, or any deviations from normal parameters during antenatal check when presenting for this post-dates clinic will be a contraindication to proceeding.
- Epilepsy *complete contraindication
- Severe asthma or respiratory disease
- Known or suspected thrombosis (blood clot)
- Anti-coagulation therapy
- previous caesarean section
- Previous adverse reaction to aromatherapy
- Broken skin or sores at the points used for acupressure (ankle, hand and neck)
- Underlying medical conditions

6.0 Clinic processes

Women suitable for inclusion identified by their community midwife, information leaflet given to woman. Community midwife to book appointment for those women who are suitable for inclusion and wish to take part. Known allergies to be announced upon booking and women with known citrus allergy must only to be given the FIRST appointment of the clinic.
Complete initial assessment form (Appendix B)

Review notes, observe for any contraindications from within notes, and review latest scan report to ensure no known placenta praevia or malposition. If contraindications found explain to patient unable to proceed, document discussion.

Complete full antenatal check, including BP, urine, palpation and auscultate fetal heart. Refer any abnormal findings to day assessment unit/delivery suite. Explain unable to proceed and document in patients hand held notes.

Offered an internal vaginal examination including a stretch and membrane sweep, in line with NICE guidance. Document consent and findings. If a woman declines stretch and sweep may still proceed with acupressure and aromatherapy providing previous steps provide no contraindications for doing so.

Apply acupressure: 20-30 intermittent presses applied to 3 points- spleen 6, Large Intestine 4, Gallbladder 21. (Image of points Appendix C) Inform participant that points may feel tender and right to withdraw from treatment at any point.

Offer a choice of aromatherapy oil blends (Appendix D) 3% blend for postdates; Preferred base oil grape seed *No nut based oils to be used

Apply oil of woman’s choice to feet or hands, if preferred the oil may be applied to your back, the main aim is to deliver the oils to your body and is not a specific therapeutic massage. (Clary sage, rose or jasmine will not be used for women who have had any uterine surgery) Application of oil time estimated to be approximately 10mins.

Document therapy used. Provide follow up audit form (Appendix E) attached to patient notes.

7.0 Mixing and safe storage of oils

7.1 Dosage

For the post-dates clinic a 3% blend will be used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage blend</th>
<th>Number of drops 5ml carrier</th>
<th>10ml carrier</th>
<th>15ml carrier</th>
<th>20ml carrier</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_Tiran (2014)_
A choice of 4 different blends will be offered, blended in grape seed oil.

**Blend 1:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OIL</th>
<th>PROPERTIES/ MIDWIFERY APPLICATION</th>
<th>PRECAUTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Cypress (Cupressus Sempervirens) | Oedema, Carpal tunnel, relaxing and calming | Possible skin sensitisation  
Caution Hypertensive women |
| Bergamot                | Relaxation, Anxiety, Calming, Uplifting, may help with headaches and nausea | Avoid exposure of skin to direct sunlight due to photosensitivity for 2hrs after application  
NOT SUITABLE FOR WOMEN WITH CITRUS ALLERGIES |
| Jasmine                 | Reduce anxiety, pain relief and enhance uterine action | Aroma may be nauseating |

**Blend 2:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OIL</th>
<th>PROPERTIES/MIDWIFERY APPLICATION</th>
<th>PRECAUTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chamomile</td>
<td>Insomnia and weariness, leg cramps, painful joints, possible uterotonic effect</td>
<td>May be irritant if used in large doses or used neat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frankincense</td>
<td>Relaxation and balancing of emotions, calming</td>
<td>Avoid in asthmatic women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ylang Ylang</td>
<td>Relaxation, good for stress, fear and anxiety, anti-depressant</td>
<td>Aroma may be overpowering, avoid high doses or prolonged use</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Blend 3:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OIL</th>
<th>PROPERTIES/MIDWIFERY APPLICATION</th>
<th>PRECAUTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black Pepper</td>
<td>Muscular aches and pains, analgesic</td>
<td>Mild photosensitivity, May cause laxative effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lavender</td>
<td>Relaxation, good for stress and anxiety, calming oil</td>
<td>May have sedative effect, caution with hypotensive women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clary Sage</td>
<td>Uterine activity, anxiety, fear</td>
<td>*Avoid until term</td>
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Author: Julie Hunter  
Job Title: Midwife  
Review Date: April 2021  
Policy Lead: Group Director Urgent Care  
Location: Policy hub/ Clinical/ Maternity / Antenatal / GL1139  
Version: 1.0 ratified 5/4/19
Blend 4:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OIL</th>
<th>PROPERTY/ MIDWIFERY APPLICATION</th>
<th>PRECAUTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neroli</td>
<td>Good for anxiety, depression, nausea, cramps and insomnia.</td>
<td>*Not suitable for those allergic to citrus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose</td>
<td>Relieves anxiety, depression, fear and tension, possible emmenagogic action</td>
<td>Avoid until term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet Orange</td>
<td>Uplifting and relaxing oil, mood enhancing, aids with stress, anxiety and fear. Helps relieve oedema</td>
<td>*Not suitable for those allergic to citrus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.2 Storage of oils:
Oils must be secured in a locked cabinet (if unmixed). Once mixed the blend must be stored in an amber glass bottle in a cool dark locked cupboard or locked fridge. Bottles must be clearly marked with contents and expiry date. Once blended oils must be discarded after a month.

7.3 Disposal of oils:
Absorb blended oil into a paper towel and dispose in clinical waste bin.

7.4 Adverse reactions:
Minor reactions such as headache and localised skin irritation may occasionally present but significant reactions are rare.

In the event of a severe reaction:
Assess Airway Breathing Circulation Disability Exposure

Remove from trigger source - If able to vacate patient from room then do so, otherwise ventilate the room

**Diagnosis:** Acute onset of illness/ Life threatening Airway (swelling, hoarseness, stridor) breathing (rapid breathing, wheeze, fatigue, cyanosis) and/or circulatory changes (pale, clammy, low blood pressure, faint, drowsy) / skin changes

- Call 999- state emergency- make clear that this is a **LIFE THREATENING ANAPHYLAXIS**
• Lay flat (USE WEDGE) - Elevate legs

• Administer Adrenaline ADULT DOSE 500mg (0.5ml) IM, repeat after 5 minutes if necessary

• Administer antihistamine: 10mg Chlorphenamine IM

• Administer Hydrocortisone 200mg IM

• COMPLETE INCIDENT REPORTING FOR ANY ADVERSE OR SEVERE REACTIONS

8.0 Referencing


2. RCM (2014) Position Statement: complementary therapies and natural remedies Royal College of Midwives


6. Images created with thanks by Mike Gutteridge 2019
Appendix A - Images of Acupressure points: Drawings by Mike Gutteridge© 2019

Drawings by Mike Gutteridge 2019©