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Autor(en) des Beitrags:
Dannecker, C; Baur, C; Ruckhaberle, E; Peschers, U; Jundt, K; Reich, A; Bauerle, M; Schneider, KTM

Titel des Beitrags:
The effect of the pelvic floor training device Epi-No (R) on the maternal pelvic floor function six months after childbirth - Follow-up study of a randomised controlled trial

Abstract:
Purpose: The aim of this study was to evaluate the effect of a training with the pelvic floor training device Epi-No(R) performed during pregnancy on maternal pelvic floor function six months after childbirth.

Material and Methods: This is a follow-up study of a randomised controlled trial (recruiting period between 2/2000 and 2/2002). Pregnant nulliparous women were invited to participate in this study and - if assigned to the study group - to practise daily with the pelvic floor training device Epi-No(R) from 37 weeks of gestation on. After childbirth all women from one of the recruiting centres were scheduled for evaluation of the pelvic floor function by a comprehensive examination, including the following techniques: questionnaire (urogynaecological symptoms such as stress incontinence, overactive bladder, anal incontinence etc.), pelvic floor muscle strength (Oxford score), anal manometry, endoanal sonography and introital sonography. Results: 146 women of one centre represent the collective of this study. The return rates of the questionnaires (before and after delivery) were about 84%. Follow-up was performed at 7.4 months (mean) after delivery and was possible for about 76% of women. With regard to important obstetric variables there was no difference between the study and the control
groups. The same applies to the questionnaire data after delivery (at the time of follow-up examination). We found no significant differences with regard to bladder neck mobility (introtital sonography), incidence of occult anal sphincter trauma (endoanal sonography) or with regard to anal pressures at rest or during squeezing and for the maximum pelvic floor contraction strength (Oxford score). Conclusion: Training during pregnancy with the pelvic floor device neither impairs nor substantially protects pelvic floor function at 6 to 8 months after childbirth.