

Weight and Waistline Reduction in Women after Massage with Cream Containing Medicinal Plant Extract

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ABSTRACT

Excessive fat deposit in adipose tissue could impair health. Several methods are recommended to manage this health problem but they are not absolutely effective. An alternative or complementary method may be necessary. Therefore this study aimed to investigate whether massage with herbal cream could reduce fat deposit. This one-group experimental study was conducted in Chiang Mai, Thailand in 2004. The intervention was the once-a-day massage for five consecutive days with cream containing medicinal plant extract. The measurements investigated were the weights (kilogram) and waistlines (inch) of woman subjects (n=29) before and after the intervention. The results showed that massage with herbal cream could reduce the weight from 58.96 to 58.43 ($p < .001$) and the waistline from 33.96 to 30.94 ($p < .001$). This investigation suggested that massage with herbal cream could reduce weight and waistline of women, thus could be used as an alternative or complementary practice to reduce fat deposit in abdominal adipose tissue.

Key words: Weight reduction, Waistline reduction, Massage, Herbal cream, Women

INTRODUCTION

Excessive fat deposit in adipose tissue could impair health (Caterson and Gill, 2002). Several methods are recommended to manage this deposit, such as exercise, diet and use of medicine. However, these methods are not absolutely effective. An alternative or complementary practice may be required to solve this health problem. People employ the massage therapy as a conventional medicine for health care for a long time ago. Currently, they still apply it to manage their health-related problems, not only in developing countries but also in developed ones. United States people use several complementary and alternative medicines, including the practice of massage therapy, for health purposes (Barnes et al., 2004; Honda and Jacobson, 2005). The massage therapy has continued to increase in use due to the fact that several studies have shown the benefits of this practice. The course of massage by mother and professional could result in weight gain in preterm infants (Ferber et al., 2002). Similarly, the massage by mother could improve the growth of newborn infants, i.e., weight, length and head circumference (Field et al., 2004). Furthermore, the foot and hand massage could reduce postoperative pain (Wang and Keck, 2004). The practice of massage therapy could also relieve the symptoms of carpal tunnel syndrome (Field et al., 2004) and Parkinson's symptoms (Reif et al., 2002). Constipation is also a health problem and the use of massage therapy can reduce the symptom (Preece, 2002). In addition, the massage therapy could improve the cancer symptoms of patients (Cassileth and Vickers, 2004). Besides the evidence supporting the effectiveness to improve health problems, massage therapy is non-invasive, inexpensive, easily practical and quite safe. Injury from massage was reported in a very low case (Grant,