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Original Article

## The Effect of Relaxation on Mother's Anxiety and Maternal–Fetal Attachment in Primiparous IVF Mothers

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## Abstract

## Objectives

Infertility is one of the main stressful events of life and a crisis affecting various dimensions of infertile couples' lives. Relaxation, as a strategy, can be effective in the individuals' resistance to stress and anxiety. Therefore, the present study aimed to assess the effect of relaxation on mother's anxiety and maternal–fetal attachment in primiparous women who used In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) to get pregnant.

## Methods

In this clinical trial, 80 primiparous women who had used IVF to get pregnant were randomly divided into a control and an intervention group. The intervention group took part in four 90-min relaxation classes in addition to receiving the routine pregnancy care. Anxiety and maternal–fetal attachment were evaluated before and one month after the intervention. Also, maternal–infantile attachment score was computed after delivery. The statistical analyses were performed using the SPSS statistical software. Chi-square and independent t-test was used to analyze the data.

## Results

The results revealed no significant difference between the two groups regarding the mean scores of anxiety and attachment before the intervention. However, a significant difference was observed in this regard after the intervention ( $41.4 \pm 4.1$  vs.  $51.0 \pm 10.4$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ).

## Conclusion

The study results showed that relaxation training was effective in reduction of anxiety and increase of maternal–fetal attachment in the women who had used IVF to get pregnant. Although there are other methods for reducing anxiety, relaxing can be used for IVF women due to its ease of use and its wide acceptance.

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## Keywords

Infertility; Relaxation; Anxiety; Fetal attachment; Infantile attachment

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Conflicts of interest: There is no conflicts of interests to declare.

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