

Did giving mothers (parents) a relaxation recording help them make more milk after giving birth very early?

What is the problem?



When babies are born sick or early, their mother's (or parent's) own milk is like a medicine for them

If the baby can't breastfeed directly, the mother (or parent) needs to get the milk out, using hands or a pump. This is called "expressing"

It can be hard to express milk, and mothers (parents) are often worried about their baby and their milk supply

What did we do?

132 people joined our research study

They had given birth when they were between 5 and 7 months pregnant

We gave half the people a relaxation recording and asked them to listen while expressing milk. The other half did not get the recording

You can download the recording here ("Supplemental Audio File 1"):



People who got the relaxation recording expressed a little bit more milk (about 75ml each day)

compared to those who didn't have it

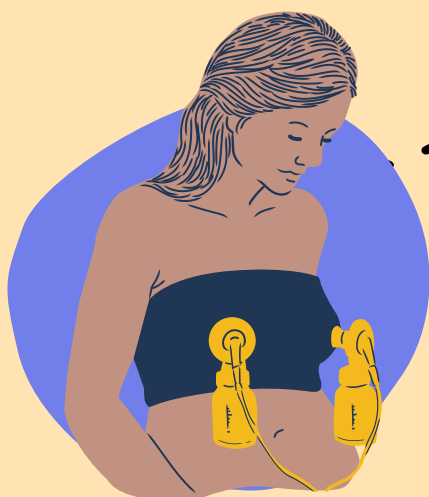
This may have been down to chance and not because of the recording - the result was not "statistically significant"

The relaxation recording had no effect on how anxious or distressed people felt

At three weeks after birth about half the people in the study had 'clinical anxiety' and about one in five people had 'post-traumatic stress'



Most people liked the recording and felt more relaxed after using it



About 1 in 10 people didn't like the recording. About 1 in 10 people felt less relaxed after using it

Some people wanted to listen to relaxing music instead, and to have a variety of things to listen to

- Mothers (people) who have given birth very early are often anxious and distressed
- Most enjoyed listening to a relaxation recording
- If the recording had any effect on the amount of milk expressed, this was likely quite small

Some people find it hard to express milk however hard they try, and others find it easier. Giving breastmilk is one of many things parents can do for sick babies, like having skin to skin cuddles, talking to them and getting involved in their care

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For more information about babies born early or sick, see www.bliss.org.uk



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