

Chapter 6

SKIN CARE IMPLEMENTATIONS IN NEWBORN: “BATHING” A LITERATURE REVIEW

Hatice UZŞEN¹
Dilek ZENGİN

INTRODUCTION

Human skin is a vital organ that maintains temperature regulation, protects against ultraviolet rays as well as toxins and infections, but more importantly, it carries out a crucial function as a sense organ. Therefore, skin care is widely believed to be elemental due to its peculiar physiological and anatomical features in newborns comparison to adults (Mir, 2001).

Following the birth, infants experience a tremendous change of environment from a liquid intrauterine environment to an extrauterine environment, which also deeply affects the skin among many other organs within the first year of infant’s life. These changes include, but not limited to, the formation of the acidic structure, an increase in hydration and in the thickness of the stratum corneum, but the most prominent change is to develop the skin barrier function (McMannus Kuller, 2004). In due process, newborn is bathed for the first time to remove the residual products of birth (blood, meconium etc.), to relieve the newborn, and to reduce the microbial colonization. Bathing further enhances the infant attachment by ensuring interaction between the baby and the parent (Çalışır&Güler 2010; Tapia-Rombo & et al., 2012). However, giving a bath immediately after the birth results in cold stress in newborns, which certainly increases the metabolic rate, leads to hypoglycemia and hypoxemia by accelerating glucose and oxygen consumption (Brogan&Rapkin, 2017).

Newborn is usually bathing with body wipes as part of the care but giving tub bathing is not widely recommended until the umbilical cord is removed (Bryanton et al., 2004; Çavusoğlu, 2000; Yıldız, 2008; Lee, 2002; Peters, 1998). However, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Association of Women’s Health, Obstetrics and Newborn Health (AWHONN) strongly suggest in their guideline that newborn should be given bath only after the care providers assure that physi-

¹ Ege University Nursing Faculty Department of Pediatric Nursing Bornova-İzmir-Turkey hatice_uzsen35@hotmail.com

However, it was eventually reported that swaddled bathing decreased the symptoms of behavioral stress like crying, agitation, unintentional withdrawal of arms and legs and thus making babies feel comfortable. As a result, swaddled bathing is recommended as the least stressful and safest bathing method (Edraki&et al, 2014; Passos& et al, 2017; Ceylan&Bolişik, 2017; Çaka&Gözen, 2017).

CONCLUSION

Skin care in newborn infants is vital in maintaining a healthy skin barrier and hygiene. However, utmost attention should be paid to protect skin flora and microbial defense system. Although the ideal time for the first bathing remains unclear, recent studies elaborated that the first bathing may be performed shortly after the birth as long as their physiological findings are stable. In addition, these studies highlighted that swaddled bathing is the safest method but there is still a need for randomized controlled studies to determine the ideal bathing method.

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