

Chapter 11

PROTECTING BODILY, MENTAL AND SPIRITUAL INTEGRITY WITH YOGA DURING BIRTH¹

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INTRODUCTION

Today, it is about to be forgotten that birth, which is affected by healthcare services going through a rapid change with the advancements in technology, is a natural and fluent action. As a result of this, it is seen that women lose their potential strength to give birth that already exists in them, they forget the strength of their own bodies and they are drifted away from their bodies, they give the control to healthcare professionals rather than being in the flow of the process in their own birth and thus the rates of C-section or interventional births increase.¹ World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that rate of C-section should not exceed 15%.² Today, the rate of C-section births in our country is way above this.¹ This increase is a privileged problem that should be noted in terms of mother and infant health and requires measures. For solving this problem, it is thought that prenatal education is important and constitutes the basis of the solution. Because, education provides information to couples regarding pregnancy, birth and postpartum period, increases woman's self-confidence about vaginal birth and enables her to know her body and makes it easier to cope with uterus contractions by teaching breath awareness and relaxation.^{1,3}

To reduce C-section rates, exercise, complementary alternative methods, yoga and meditation are also effective methods in addition to birth preparation classes.⁴ The most recommended and preferred exercise that can be performed during pregnancy together with birth preparation trainings is yoga practices.

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disturbances. Today, it is implemented quite effectively in protecting and improving health. Pregnancy yoga is also a practice which makes it easier to monitor the process not only in pregnancy but also in midwifery care practices due to its positive impacts on birth process.⁵⁸ In addition to being implemented effectively in pregnancy and labour, yoga can be implemented in women's health and all periods of life of the woman. It is also implemented in the field of gynaecology for infertility treatment, menopause complaints, premenstrual syndrome (PMS), dysmenorrhea and gynaecological cancers.^{52,55,58,59}

In order that midwives and nurses can include pregnancy yoga in pregnancy care and labour process, they need to get a training and improve themselves in that field. Getting the trainings for pregnancy yoga provided by academicians specialized in the field and learning the practices would allow them to guide the pregnant woman appropriately and include yoga in care processes. In addition, following scientific studies in that field would also contribute in improvement of care and practices. At the same time, practitioners would be clarified and authorities would be identified by making necessary legal regulations.

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