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A comparative study on the efficacy of Thai traditional abdominal massage and Senokot in relieving constipation

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Constipation is a gastrointestinal disorder commonly found among people in all age groups and physical states. If left untreated, constipation can result in more severe illnesses or even increase the risk of colon cancer. Treatment of constipation can be carried out using medicinal or non-medicinal approaches. Non-medicinal approaches involve the modification of healthcare behavior, such as consumption of food with a high-fiber content, intake of plenty of water and improvement of sleep quality and the application of therapeutic abdominal massage. Applying a randomized-controlled trial research design, the present study aims to compare Thai traditional abdominal massage and Senokot in terms of their efficacy in relieving constipation. The subjects were 40 patients diagnosed with constipation using the Rome III criteria. They were randomized into the treatment group (n=20) and the control group (n=20). The former received a 50-min Thai traditional abdominal massage daily for seven days, whereas the latter took two tablets of Senokot daily before bedtime for seven days. The research instruments were survey questionnaires, food and beverage consumption and defecation form and the Bristol stool chart. It was found that although both the Thai traditional abdominal massage and Senokot could effectively increase the frequency of defecation, only the massage did not cause undesirable side effects or complications such as irritation to the intestinal mucosa barrier. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that Thai traditional abdominal massage should be a better treatment option for constipation than Senokot.

Biography

Jurairat Boonruab has completed her PhD from Chulalongkorn University, Thailand. She is currently working as the Lecturer at Faculty of Medicine, Thammasat University, Thailand.

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