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Spinal curvature and postural characteristics in postpartum women-compared with non-parous women



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The purpose of this study was to compare the spinal curvatures and postural characteristics of postpartum women with nonparous women. Twelve (12) women at 2-12 months post-childbirth comprised of the study group, and 10 non-parous women volunteers comprised the control group. Spinal curvatures were measured with the Spinal Mouse® to calculate the means for sacral inclination, thoracic and lumbar curvature and inclination. Groups were compared using the paired t-test. The mean age, height and body weight of the postpartum women were 32.0 ± 3.2 years old, 157.9 ± 4.5 cm, and 48.8 ± 5.3 kg, and were 8.0 ± 1.7 months postpartum. Those of the control group were 32.3 ± 3.7 years old, 158.4 ± 7.7 cm, and 50.3 ± 6.1 kg. There were no significant differences in age, height or body weight between the two groups. For postpartum women, the means of the calculated spinal curvatures were: sacral inclination was $10.0 \pm 3.8^\circ$, thoracic curvature was $42.6 \pm 7.8^\circ$, lumbar curvature was $-25.3 \pm 4.8^\circ$ and inclination was $-2.9 \pm 2.8^\circ$. The sacral inclination ($18.6 \pm 4.2^\circ$), thoracic curvature ($40.4 \pm 8.1^\circ$), lumbar curvature ($-34.6 \pm 5.2^\circ$) and inclination ($-1.2 \pm 2.1^\circ$) were determined for the control group. There were significant differences found in sacral inclination and lumbar curvature between the study group and the control group ($p < 0.05$). In this study, postpartum women showed a flat lumbar spinal curvature or decreased lumbar lordosis and sacral posterior inclination, and these spinal curvatures may be caused by the dysfunction of trunk muscles related to the pregnancy or delivery.

Biography

Natsuko Hiramoto has obtained her graduation from Hiroshima University and then she was qualified as a registered Physical Therapist in Japan. She has been working at Hiroshima International University and completed her PhD from the same university. She is an Executive Committee Member of the Japanese Physical Therapy Association section for women's and men's health. She has published more than 10 papers in reputed journals and four books about women's health for Japanese physical therapists.

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