Effect of a Rehabilitation Program with or Without Kinesio Tape on Shoulder Pain and Function after Mastectomy in Women with Breast Cancer

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Abstract

Introduction: Breast cancer is the most common cancer in women. Surgery is the main treatment, and patients may experience some complications after surgery, including pain and shoulder function limitation. The severity of these complications is greater in modified radical mastectomy. In various studies, Kinesio Tape (KT) has been introduced as a supporting and complementary method in rehabilitation after surgeries. The aim of the present study was to compare the effects of a rehabilitation program with or without KT on shoulder pain and function after mastectomy in women with breast cancer.

Methods: This study was a double-blind randomized clinical trial (RCT). In this study, 20 participants were randomly assigned to 2 groups. The intervention started the first day after surgery. One of the groups (n = 10) received therapeutic exercise program, and the other group (n = 10) received therapeutic exercise program as well as lymphatic correction with fan-shaped KT over a four-week period. KT was attached to the upper limb of the surgical side, the effects of the interventions were examined from two aspects of shoulder pain and function (based on the SPADI questionnaire).

Results: The findings of the study indicated that both groups had significant improvements in pain and function after the four-week period of intervention. The improvement in shoulder function was significantly greater in the exercise + KT group (p < 0.05), although there was no significant difference between the two groups in shoulder pain (p > 0.05).

Conclusion: The use of fan-shaped KT with therapeutic exercises is recommended for improving the shoulder function after a modified radical mastectomy.

Keywords: Kinesio Taping, Breast Cancer, Modified Radical Mastectomy, Pain, Function, Shoulder