

Rock-a-bye Baby, Soft Voice, Delicate Massage, Loving Gaze, Gentle Rocking Effectiveness of Parent-Guided and ATVV Interventions to Reduce Stress in Parents of Preterm Infants in the NICU

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Background

10% of infants are born prematurely¹

- 70% are admitted to the NICU¹

Parents experience a multitude of stressors

- Being new parents²
- Caring for a premature infant²

High parental stress leads to:

- Increased risk mental health issues³
- Decreased parent-infant bonding³
- Poor infant outcomes³

Interventions may reduce the parental stress and its negative impact, i.e., parent-guided and ATVV

Purpose

To investigate the effectiveness of parent-guided and ATVV interventions to reduce stress in parents of preterm infants who are hospitalized in the NICU

Method

Databases: PubMed, CINAHL, and PsychInfo

Keywords: NICU, parent-guided interventions, stress, preterm infant, neonate, baby, and ATVV



<https://heyletsmakestuff.com/silver-linings-of-having-a-baby-in-the-nicu/>

Results

Nine articles were reviewed

- 8 out of 9 studies found that parent-guided and ATVV interventions decreased stress in parents
- Fathers experienced more stress than mothers⁹

Table 1. Interventions and Outcomes

Intervention	Parental Stress Outcomes
Auditory ^{4,5,9}	Decrease in perceived parental anxiety and stress
ATVV ³	Decrease in mother's perceived anxiety and stress
Family Integrated Care ³	Decrease in parental reported stress
Kangaroo Care ^{1,8}	Reduction in mother's stress
Occupational Care ²	Decrease in mother's perceived stress and increase in efficiency of breast feeding
Tactile ⁶	Decrease in mother's perceived stress

Limitations

Self-reports of stress are subject to bias

Intervention terminology is not consistent

Limited generalizability

- Small sample size
- Cross-sectional design



<https://www.jchb.org/ode-neonatal-intensive-care-unit-nicu-parents/>

Implications for Research and Practice

Further investigation is warrant

- Collect supporting evidence related to the effectiveness of parent-guided and ATVV
- Determine the accessibility and feasibility with consideration for different parental populations

More focus on assessing parental stress

- Reducing stress in parents promotes optimal mental health and parent-infant bonding