

3936727 RAPN /M : MAJOR : PEDIATRIC NURSING; M.N.S.(PEDIATRIC NURSING)

KEY WORDS : MATERNAL-INFANT INTERACTION / MATERNAL-INFANT
ATTACHMENT / GROWTH / PREMATURE INFANTS

THASANEE TRISAYALUK : EFFECTS OF MATERNAL-INFANT INTERACTION
ON MATERNAL-INFANT ATTACHMENT AND GROWTH OF PREMATURE INFANTS.

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M.Ed. 83 p. ISBN 974-662-410-5

The purpose of this quasi-experimental research was to evaluate the effects of maternal-infant interaction on maternal-infant attachment and growth of premature infants. Maternal-infant bonding theory of Klaus and Kennell was used to guide the study. The sample consisted of 50 pairs of mothers and premature infants who were admitted in Queen Silikit National Institute of Child Health. They were assigned by purposive sampling into a control group and an experimental group. Each group consisted of 25 pairs of subjects. Subjects of both groups received the usual nursing care, but the subjects in the experimental group received the investigator's maternal-infant interaction program. The maternal-infant attachment questionnaires and growth of infants record form were used for data collection. The data were analyzed by using percentage, means, standard deviation, and t-test.

The results of this study were as follow :

1. At the end of the program and post discharge from hospital for 2 weeks, the maternal-infant attachment score of the experimental group was significantly higher than that of the control group. 2. At the end of the program, the infants in the experimental group had significantly higher weight gain, length, and head circumference than those in the control group, but post discharge for 2 weeks there was no statistically significant difference between the experimental group and the control group. The results of this study suggest that the maternal-infant interaction that mothers and premature infants received during the sensitive period increased maternal-infant attachment and stimulated growth of premature infants, particularly at the end of the program. It is however, what if any influence the program had in the long run. Further research is needed to study the use of this type of program in more sample groups.