

# NURSING INTERVENTIONS FOR ANXIETY MANAGEMENT DURING LABOR

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Anxiety is one of the symptoms that women may experience during labor, with a prevalence of 14.5%. The reasons why women suffer from stress in this situation may be due to personality, lack of social support, unpleasant experiences and pain or discomfort. (1)

Anxiety stimulates the sympathetic nervous system and the release of stress hormones such as glucocorticoids and cortisol. These hormones negatively affect uterine contractions, resulting in a prolonged labor. (1)

Stress may be harmful not only for the mother but also for the baby, causing:

- Head compression of the baby
- Low APGAR score
- Prolonged parturition
- Fetal death
- Poor maternal bonding and delayed lactation. (1)



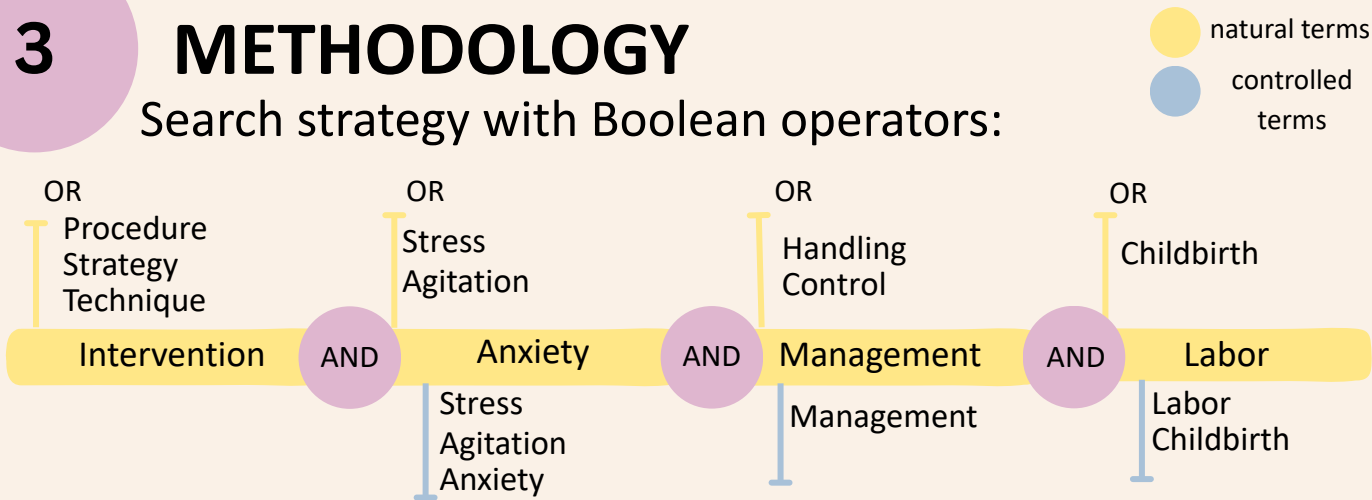
Pharmacological resources used currently to manage anxiety cause side effects.

## 2 AIM

The aim of this literature review is to explore effective non-pharmacological interventions for anxiety management during labor.

## 3 METHODOLOGY

Search strategy with Boolean operators:

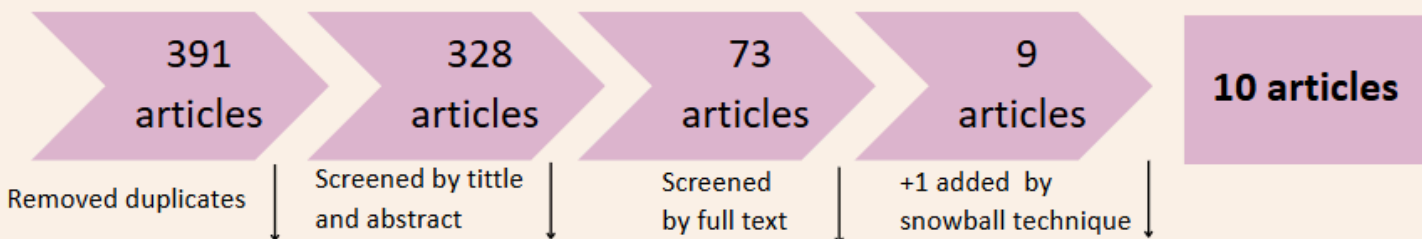


Literature review conducted in two databases.



Inclusion criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Studies with good outcomes on anxiety</li><li>• Studies in English and Spanish</li><li>• Articles from 2019-2024</li></ul>
Exclusion criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Studies that address anxiety during pregnancy</li><li>• Caesarean sections or preterm deliveries</li><li>• Articles with full text unavailable</li></ul>

## 4 RESULTS



### TECHNOLOGY-BASED INTERVENTIONS

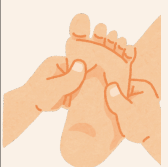


Virtual Reality (VR) with images of natural landscapes or images of mothers breastfeeding their babies has been proven to be effective in anxiety management according to the three articles selected, as all of them show a decrease on the anxiety mean in the participants. (2)

Music therapy, particularly classical music can be used for anxiolytic purposes during labor. In one of the studies, the group that used music therapy during labor showed lower levels of serum cortisol compared to the control group. (3) The totality of articles stated that music was successful in managing anxiety.



### INTERVENTIONS BASED ON NATURAL REMEDIES



Aromatherapy is one of the most used non-pharmacological interventions during labor. The participants using aromatherapy perceived lower levels of anxiety. The three articles that explored the effectiveness of aromatherapy in stress agree on its effectiveness.

Reflexology is a technique which uses certain methods to stimulate the nerve points and has been evidenced to reduce anxiety according to the articles. As stated by one of the articles, this technique decreased cortisol and ACTH levels, while oxytocin levels increased. (4)

## 5 CONCLUSION

Due to the relevance of managing anxiety during labor, this review has put together different interventions that have been proven to be effective in anxiety management and should be implemented in clinical practice to manage anxiety. Nevertheless, further research is needed in order to implement the best care possible.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

