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The Effectiveness of Oxytocin Massage in Increasing Breast Milk Production in Postpartum Mothers : A Literature Riview

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Abstract

Background: Breast milk is the primary source of nutrition for infants and plays an important role in supporting growth, development, and protection against various diseases. However, postpartum mothers may experience problems with breast milk production and flow, particularly during the early postpartum period. Oxytocin massage is a nonpharmacological intervention that may support the milk ejection process and improve breastfeeding. This study aims to identify and synthesize the effectiveness of oxytocin massage in increasing breast milk production and flow in postpartum mothers. This study employs a literature review design. A literature search was conducted via Google Scholar and PubMed using a combination of keywords related to oxytocin massage, breast milk production, postpartum mothers, lactation, and breastfeeding. Studies were selected based on inclusion and exclusion criteria and documented using PRISMA guidelines. A total of 9 studies met the criteria and were included in the synthesis. Most studies indicated that oxytocin massage was associated with increased breast milk production, volume, output, and flow, as well as improved breastfeeding responses among postpartum mothers. Several studies also showed that oxytocin massage combined with other interventions, such as lavender essential oil and the Marmet technique, could support improvements in breast milk production. However, variations were found in sample size, intervention duration, massage techniques, outcome indicators, and additional interventions across the reviewed studies. Oxytocin massage exhibits a relatively consistent pattern of effectiveness in supporting breast milk production and flow in postpartum mothers. Nevertheless, successful breastfeeding is also influenced by proper latch, feeding frequency, maternal psychological well-being, and support from healthcare providers.

Keywords : Oxytocin Massage, Breast Milk Production, Postpartum Mothers, Lactation, Breastfeeding.

Introduction

Breast milk is the primary source of nutrition for infants, containing nutrients and immunological components that are essential for their growth, development, and protection against

various diseases. Exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life is recommended by the WHO because breast milk can meet an infant's nutritional and fluid needs during this period (WHO, 2024) Successful breastfeeding is also a crucial factor in improving maternal and child health, as optimal breastfeeding practices provide health benefits for both the infant and the mother (WHO & UNICEF, 2024). However, breastfeeding does not always proceed optimally, particularly in the early postpartum period when mothers are still adapting after childbirth and beginning to establish lactation. (Nurliawati et al., 2024)

Globally, the prevalence of infants under six months of age who are exclusively breastfed is approximately 48% (WHO, 2024). In Indonesia, based on the March 2025 National Social Survey (Susenas), the national percentage of infants under six months of age who are exclusively breastfed reached 72.13% (BPS, 2025). Although the majority of infants are exclusively breastfed, there are still some who are not. This situation indicates that successful breastfeeding still faces various barriers, particularly during the early postpartum period. One of the challenges mothers may face is suboptimal breast milk production or a lack of a steady milk flow. Psychological factors, the mother's ability to breastfeed, environmental support, and the smoothness of milk flow are some of the factors that can influence the breastfeeding process. (Irawan et al., 2024)

According to data from the March 2025 BPS Susenas survey, the rate of exclusive breastfeeding in West Java was 76.40%, while in Sukabumi Regency in 2025, it declined to 61.2% (BPS, 2025; Irawan et al., 2024). These findings indicate that support for mothers remains essential, as breastfeeding success is influenced by sociocultural factors, family support, and the ease of milk production. (Irawan et al., 2024; Nurliawati et al., 2024; Sukabumi, 2024)

Breastfeeding difficulties in postpartum mothers can take various forms, one of which is a delay or irregularity in milk production. In the early postpartum period, the lactation process is still adjusting, so breast milk production and flow may not yet be optimal. This situation can make it difficult for mothers to meet their babies' breast milk needs and cause concerns about whether they are providing enough milk. If breast milk cannot be produced and expressed optimally, babies may have trouble getting enough milk, making the breastfeeding process less effective. Thus, issues with breast milk production and flow are among the breastfeeding challenges that require attention, as

they can affect a mother's ability to maintain optimal breastfeeding. This is supported by (Nurliawati et al., 2024), who explain that various factors can hinder both breast milk production and flow in postpartum mothers, leading to ineffective breastfeeding. Research by (Silviani et al., 2023) also indicates that a steady breast milk flow is a key aspect related to the breastfeeding process in postpartum mothers. (Nurliawati et al., 2024; Silviani et al., 2023)

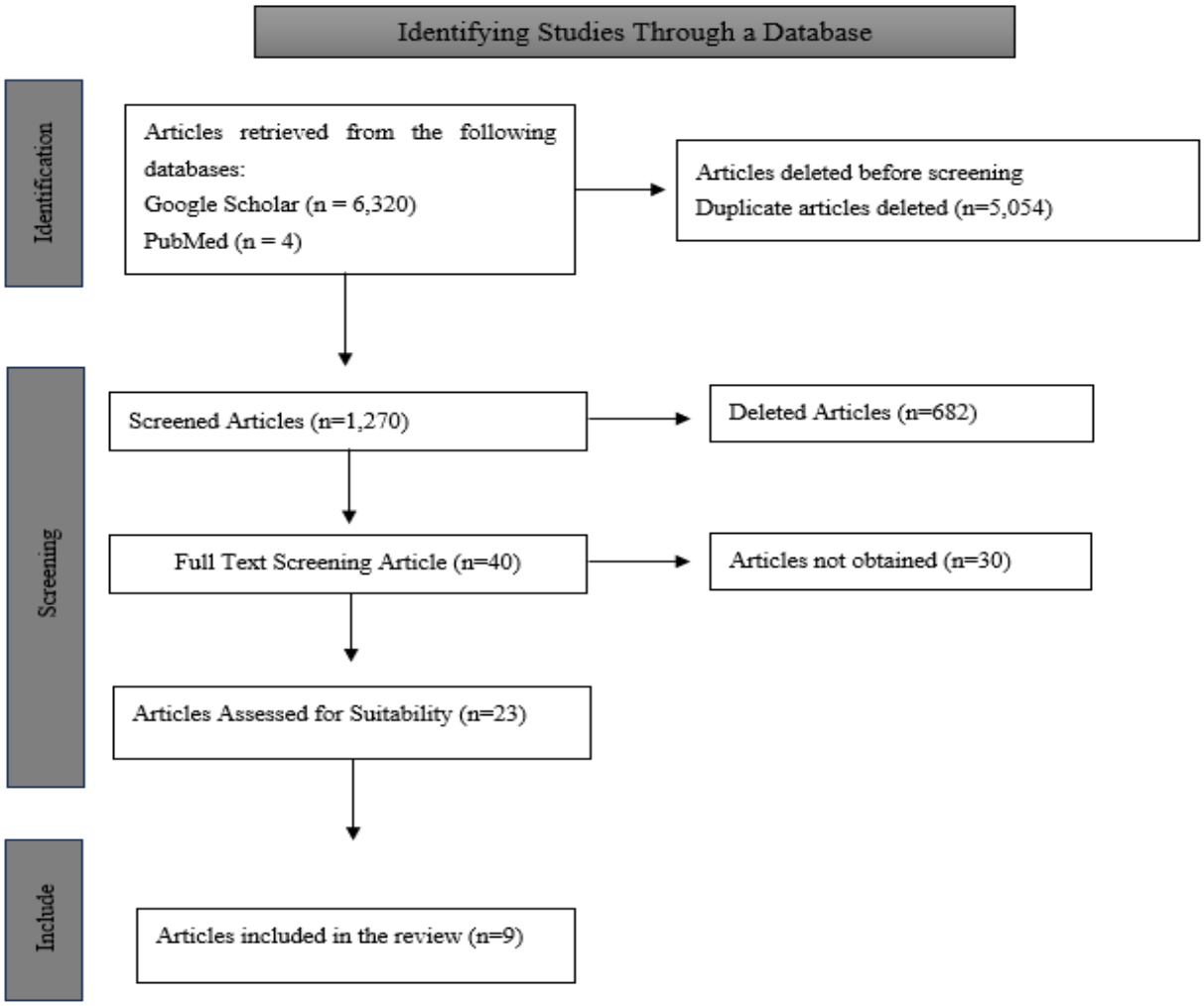
These difficulties in breast milk production and ejection indicate the need for interventions that can help support a smooth lactation process in postpartum mothers. One nonpharmacological intervention that can be performed is oxytocin massage, which aims to stimulate the oxytocin reflex and thereby support the ejection of breast milk. A study (Maharani et al., 2026) showed that oxytocin massage using lavender essential oil effectively increases breast milk production in postpartum mothers. The results of a study (Siregar et al., 2024) also indicate that oxytocin massage can be used as an intervention to increase breast milk production in postpartum mothers. Furthermore, a study (Valianda et al., 2025) indicates that oxytocin massage combined with the Marmet technique can improve the flow of breast milk. These findings align with a systematic review (Alif et al., 2024), which concluded that oxytocin massage is generally effective in increasing breast milk production in breastfeeding mothers. Thus, oxytocin massage can be one of the nonpharmacological intervention options to help address problems with breast milk production and ejection in postpartum mothers. (Alif et al., 2024; Maharani et al., 2026; Siregar et al., 2024; Valianda et al., 2025)

The effectiveness of oxytocin massage in supporting breast milk production and ejection is also evident from various studies using different outcome measures. A study (Yaturahmi et al., 2026) showed that oxytocin massage can increase breast milk ejection in multiparous postpartum mothers, as assessed by infant elimination indicators. Meanwhile, (Yenita et al., 2025) investigated the effectiveness of oxytocin massage in increasing breast milk production in breastfeeding mothers, and (Silviani et al., 2023) assessed the effect of oxytocin massage therapy on the flow of breast milk in postpartum mothers. These differences in indicators suggest that breast milk production and ejection can be viewed from multiple perspectives, making it necessary to conduct a more comprehensive review of previous research findings. Furthermore, variations in respondent characteristics, massage techniques, intervention duration, and measurement indicators underscore the need for a

literature review to compare and synthesize research findings on the effectiveness of oxytocin massage. (Silviani et al., 2023; Yaturahmi et al., 2026; Yenita et al., 2025)

Materials and Methods

This study employed a literature review method to identify, examine, and analyze articles on the effectiveness of oxytocin massage in increasing breast milk production in postpartum mothers. The literature search was conducted using the Google Scholar and PubMed databases with the keywords "Oxytocin Massage", "Breast Milk Production", "Postpartum Mothers", "Lactation" and "Breastfeeding."



PRISMA Flowchart 1

Inclusion criteria included original research articles published between 2021 and 2026, available in full text, written in Indonesian or English, and discussing the effectiveness of oxytocin massage in

increasing breast milk production in postpartum mothers. Articles that did not meet the criteria were excluded from the selection process. Article selection followed the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines, resulting in 9 articles that met the criteria for analysis.

Results

In the initial stage of the literature search, 6,324 articles were identified using relevant keywords from various databases. Next, duplicates were removed, resulting in the elimination of 5,054 articles. After removing duplicates, the titles and abstracts were screened, yielding 1,270 articles relevant to the research topic. Of these 682 articles, 30 were inaccessible or did not have full-text versions available. Subsequently, 40 articles were further evaluated through a full-text review; however, 30 of them did not meet the inclusion criteria or were not aligned with the research objectives. Thus, the 9 articles that met the criteria were used as the primary sources in this literature review, as shown in the table.

No	Researchers and publications	Title	Types of research	Population	Results	Conclusion
1	(Maharani et al., 2026)	Efektivitas Pijat Oksitosin dengan Lavender Essensial Oil terhadap Produksi ASI pada Ibu Nifas	Quasi Experiment	32 Respondents	The study indicated an increase in breast milk production in both groups; however, the increase in the treatment group was more significant than that in the control group (p-value = 0.001 < 0.05)	Oxytocin massage using lavender oil is effective in increasing breast milk production in postpartum mothers.
2	(Yaturahmi et al., 2026)	Pijat Oksitosin terhadap	Quasi Experiment	20 Respondents	There was an increase in	Oxytocin massage affects breast milk

No	Researchers and publications	Title	Types of research	Population	Results	Conclusion
		Pengeluaran Asi pada Ibu Postpartum Multipara			breast milk output following oxytocin massage, as indicated by the frequency of urination in infants (p = 0.003) and the frequency of bowel movements in infants (p = 0.002).	production in multiparous postpartum mothers in the service area of the Kota Baru Community Health Center (UPT Puskesmas) in Indragiri Hulu Regency in 2025.
3	(Yenita et al., 2025)	Efektivitas Pijat Oksitosin untuk Meningkatkan Produksi Asi pada Ibu Menyusui di Upt Puskesmas Lubuk Muda	Pre-Experiment	14 Respondents	Based on the results of a statistical test using the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test, a p-value of 0.001 was obtained (p < 0.05).	It can be concluded that there is a relationship between the effectiveness of oxytocin massage and increased breast milk production in breastfeeding mothers at the Lubuk Muda Community Health Center (UPT Puskesmas).
4	(Valianda et al., 2025)	Pengaruh Pemberian Pijat Oksitosin dan Teknik Marmet Terhadap Kelancaran Produksi Asi pada Ibu Postpartum di	Study Case Literature Review	2 Respondents	The administration of oxytocin massage significantly increased breast milk production from 5 ml to 140 ml by day 7,	There was an improvement in breast milk production in postpartum mothers who received an intervention combining

No	Researchers and publications	Title	Types of research	Population	Results	Conclusion
		Wilayah Kerja Puskesmas Belinyu			while the Marmet technique increased breast milk production from 15 ml to 100 ml by day 7.	oxytocin massage and the Marmet technique.
5	(Siregar et al., 2024)	Perbandingan Pijat Woolwich Dan Pijat Oksitosin Terhadap Produksi Asi Ibu Postpartum Di Pmb X Kampar	Pre-Eksperiment	32 Respondents	The results of this study showed that breast milk production before the Woolwich massage was 55.00 ml and after the Woolwich massage was 365.00 ml; before the oxytocin massage it was 59.38 ml and after the oxytocin massage it was 365.75 ml. The p-value for the Woolwich massage was 0.000425 < 0.05, while the p-value for the oxytocin massage was 0.000413 < 0.05.	"Ho" was accepted and "Ha" was rejected, meaning that there is a difference between the Woolwich Massage and the Oxytocin Massage in terms of breast milk production in postpartum mothers at PMB X in Kampar Regency.
6	(Nurliawati et al., 2024)	Intervensi Pijat Oksitosin Pada	Case Study	1 Respondents	Following a three-day	Oxytocin massage interventions can

No	Researchers and publications	Title	Types of research	Population	Results	Conclusion
		Ibu Post Partum: Studi Kasus			oxytocin massage intervention consisting of six sessions, the patient demonstrated an effective breastfeeding response. This was evidenced by firm breasts, milk let-down, the baby nursing calmly, proper latch, and the baby falling asleep after feeding.	improve breastfeeding status in postpartum mothers.
7	(Silviani et al., 2023)	Pengaruh Terapi Pijat Oksitosin terhadap Kelancaran Asi pada Ibu Nifas di Wilayah Kerja Puskesmas M. Taha Bengkulu Selatan	Pre-Eksperiment	16 Respondents	The results of the study showed that, out of 16 respondents, the average breast milk flow score before the oxytocin massage treatment was 4.19, and the average breast milk flow score after the oxytocin massage treatment was 8.38.	Oxytocin massage therapy has an effect on breast milk production in postpartum mothers in the service area of the M. Taha Community Health Center in South Bengkulu.

No	Researchers and publications	Title	Types of research	Population	Results	Conclusion
8	(Dağli & Celik, 2021)	The effect of oxytocin massage and music on breast milk production and anxiety level of the mothers of premature infants who are in the neonatal intensive care unit: A self-controlled trial	True Experimental	60 Respondents	The results of the study show that oxytocin massage and music significantly increase breast milk production and reduce maternal anxiety ($p < 0.05$).	There is a link between oxytocin massage and increased breast milk production.
9	(Anbarasi et al., 2023)	Effectiveness of oxytocin massage on promoting lactation among postpartum mothers at Saveetha medical college and hospital, Thandalam, Chennai	Self Controlled Trial	73 Respondents	The study results show that breast milk production increased significantly after oxytocin massage ($p < 0.001$).	There is a link between oxytocin massage and increased breast milk production in postpartum mothers.

Discussion

Based on the results of a literature review, oxytocin massage has been shown to have a positive effect on breast milk production and flow in postpartum mothers. (Anbarasi et al., 2023) found that breast milk production increased significantly following oxytocin massage, with a p-value of <0.001. These results suggest that oxytocin massage can serve as a nonpharmacological intervention to support the lactation process in mothers after childbirth. The increase in breast milk production following oxytocin massage may be related to the stimulation provided along the spine to the shoulder blades, thereby helping mothers feel more comfortable and relaxed during the

postpartum period. A more relaxed state can support the release of oxytocin, a hormone that plays a role in the milk ejection reflex. This study aligns with previous research by (hidayati & Hanifah, 2019) which showed an increase in breast milk production in postpartum mothers following oxytocin massage. These results reinforce the findings of (Anbarasi et al., 2023) that oxytocin massage can be used as a form of stimulation to help facilitate the milk ejection process in postpartum mothers.

An increase in breast milk production was also found in the study by (Silviani et al., 2023), which showed that the average breastfeeding ease score increased from 4.19 before oxytocin massage to 8.38 after the intervention. This change in score indicates an improvement in the ease of the breastfeeding process after mothers received oxytocin massage. Smooth breastfeeding is crucial during the postpartum period because the success of breastfeeding is influenced not only by the presence of breast milk in the breasts but also by the milk's ability to flow properly so that it can be taken by the infant. Oxytocin massage can provide stimulation and a sense of comfort to the mother, thereby supporting the milk ejection process. This study aligns with previous research by Agustia and Camelia, which showed that oxytocin massage for postpartum mothers can help increase breast milk production and flow. These results indicate that the changes in breastfeeding ease observed in the study by (Silviani et al., 2023) are associated with improvements in the milk ejection process following oxytocin massage stimulation.

The findings of (Yaturahmi et al., 2026) also indicate an increase in breast milk output following oxytocin massage. This increase was assessed based on indicators of the infant's urination and bowel movements, with a p-value of 0.003 for urination and 0.002 for bowel movements. The use of urination and defecation as indicators suggests that breast milk adequacy can be assessed not only based on the amount of breast milk successfully expressed or collected but also based on the infant's response after receiving breast milk. Infants receiving adequate breast milk intake typically exhibit appropriate elimination patterns; thus, changes in the frequency of urination and defecation can serve as supporting indicators of the infant's nutritional adequacy. This study aligns with previous research by (Chaloemram et al., 2026), who, through a systematic review and meta-analysis, demonstrated that massage interventions are associated with increased breast milk

production and an increase in the number of the infant's urination episodes. These findings support the results of (Yaturahmi et al., 2026), who found that changes in breast milk production following oxytocin massage can be reflected not only in breast milk volume measurements but also in changes in the infant's response after feeding.

The effectiveness of oxytocin massage on breast milk production was further demonstrated in a study by (Yenita et al., 2025), which showed that oxytocin massage is effective in increasing breast milk production in postpartum mothers. These results indicate a change in breast milk production after mothers received the oxytocin massage intervention. Physiologically, breast milk production and ejection involve several hormones, particularly prolactin and oxytocin. Prolactin plays a role in the production of breast milk, while oxytocin plays a role in the milk ejection reflex by causing contractions of the myoepithelial cells surrounding the breast alveoli, thereby propelling breast milk into the milk ducts. Therefore, stimulation that promotes the release of oxytocin can aid the milk ejection process. This study aligns with previous research by (Uvna¨s-Moberg et al., 2020), which, through a systematic review, explained that breastfeeding is associated with the release of oxytocin and that this hormone plays a crucial role in the milk ejection reflex. Thus, the findings of (Yenita et al., 2025) can be understood through the physiological mechanism that oxytocin stimulation helps support the milk ejection process during the postpartum period.

(Maharani et al., 2026) also demonstrated an increase in breast milk production following an oxytocin massage intervention combined with lavender essential oil, with more significant results in the intervention group and a p-value of 0.001. These findings suggest that oxytocin massage combined with a relaxation approach can influence breast milk production. However, since the study used a combination of oxytocin massage and lavender essential oil, the increase in breast milk production cannot be fully attributed to oxytocin massage alone. The lavender essential oil used as part of the intervention may have provided a relaxing effect, making the mother more comfortable. A calmer psychological state can support the breastfeeding process, as stress and tension can inhibit the milk ejection reflex. This study aligns with previous research on the combination of emotional management and oxytocin massage, which demonstrated changes in oxytocin and prolactin levels in postpartum mothers. These findings suggest that a mother's emotional state and physical

stimulation through massage may be interrelated in supporting the physiological process of lactation.

The psychological aspects of motherhood are also evident in the study by (Dağli & Celik, 2021), which showed that oxytocin massage accompanied by music can increase breast milk production while reducing postpartum anxiety in mothers, with significant results. These findings suggest that the breastfeeding process is not only related to physiological factors but is also influenced by the mother's psychological state. Anxiety, tension, and stress during the postpartum period can affect a mother's comfort while breastfeeding and may potentially interfere with the milk ejection reflex. Massage can help create a sense of comfort and relaxation, while the music used in the study was also part of the intervention designed to foster a calmer atmosphere. This study aligns with previous research by (Hidayati et al., 2025), which found a correlation between oxytocin massage and oxytocin levels as well as breast milk production in postpartum mothers. These results reinforce the notion that hormonal responses and psychological states are aspects that need to be considered in supporting the lactation process. However, since the study by (Dağli & Celik, 2021) used oxytocin massage in combination with music, the increase in milk production and reduction in anxiety cannot be attributed solely to the effects of oxytocin massage alone.

Changes in breast milk production were also found in a study by (Siregar et al., 2024) that compared the Woolwich massage and the oxytocin massage. In the oxytocin massage group, breast milk volume increased from an average of 59.38 ml to 365.75 ml, while in the Woolwich massage group, it increased from 55 ml to 365 ml. These results indicate that stimulation through massage techniques can lead to changes in breast milk volume in postpartum mothers. The two techniques have different stimulation characteristics, so their use can be tailored to the mother's needs and condition. Oxytocin massage places greater emphasis on stimulating the back area to support the oxytocin response, whereas other massage techniques may provide stimulation to the breast area. This study aligns with previous research by Indrayani et al., which showed that a combination of Oketani massage and oxytocin massage can increase breast milk production in postpartum mothers. These results indicate that various forms of stimulation through massage techniques can be used as part of lactation support, particularly to aid the milk ejection process.

The results of the study by (Valianda et al., 2025) showed an increase in breast milk volume following both oxytocin massage and the Marmet technique. In cases treated with oxytocin massage, breast milk volume increased from 5 ml to 140 ml by the seventh day, while with the Marmet technique, it increased from 15 ml to 100 ml. These results indicate a change in breast milk volume following the interventions. However, the small sample size consisting of only two participants means the findings should be interpreted with caution and cannot be broadly generalized. The Marmet technique involves stimulation through manual breast expression, whereas oxytocin massage is specifically aimed at stimulating the back area associated with oxytocin release. This study aligns with previous research by (Ernawati et al., 2024) which showed that a combination of breast massage and oxytocin massage can help increase breast milk production in primiparous postpartum mothers. These findings suggest that both breast stimulation and oxytocin massage can be part of supportive interventions to assist mothers in the breast milk ejection process, even though each technique has different mechanisms and procedures.

Oxytocin massage may also be associated with changes in the overall breastfeeding response, as demonstrated by (Nurliawati et al., 2024). After receiving oxytocin massage for three days comprising six sessions several changes were observed that supported the breastfeeding process: the breasts became firmer, breast milk began to flow, the infant was calmer, the infant's latch improved, and the infant was able to fall asleep after feeding. These findings suggest that the success of an intervention should not always be assessed based solely on breast milk volume. The infant's response and the breastfeeding process can also provide insight into the smoothness of breastfeeding. Proper latch-on allows the infant to breastfeed more effectively, while an infant who appears calm after feeding may be a sign that the infant is receiving adequate nourishment. This study aligns with previous research by Sahelangi et al., which showed that combining oxytocin massage with infant massage can increase breast milk production. These results indicate that support for the breastfeeding process can be provided through interventions that promote comfort for both the mother and the baby.

Overall, the nine studies analyzed in this literature review show a relatively consistent pattern regarding increases in breast milk production, volume, output, and flow following oxytocin

massage. (Anbarasi et al., 2023; Maharani et al., 2026; Silviani et al., 2023; Yaturahmi et al., 2026; Yenita et al., 2025) reported changes in breast milk production or flow, while (Valianda et al., 2025) and (Siregar et al., 2024) reported changes in breast milk volume. (Nurliawati et al., 2024) reported changes in breastfeeding response, while (Dağli & Celik, 2021) reported changes in breast milk production accompanied by a reduction in anxiety. These findings are supported by previous research outside the scope of the reviewed studies, including (Agustia & Camelia, 2025; Chaloemram et al., 2026; Ernawati et al., 2024; hidayati & Hanifah, 2019; Hidayati et al., 2025; Indrayani et al., 2024), which generally demonstrate the benefits of various forms of massage and stimulation on the lactation process. Nevertheless, there are differences in study characteristics, sample size, type of intervention, duration of massage, indicators of breast milk production, and the use of additional interventions such as music and aromatherapy. Therefore, oxytocin massage can be considered one of the nonpharmacological interventions that support the lactation process; however, successful breastfeeding still requires proper latch, adequate feeding frequency, the mother's psychological well-being, support from healthcare providers, and other factors that influence the breastfeeding process.

Conclusion

Based on a synthesis of 9 articles, oxytocin massage has been shown to be effective in increasing breast milk production, ejection, and flow in postpartum mothers. These improvements are evidenced by an increase in breast milk production volume, improved milk flow, and more effective breastfeeding responses following oxytocin massage intervention. Several studies also indicate that oxytocin massage can yield more significant results when combined with other interventions, such as the use of lavender essential oil and the Marmet technique. Thus, oxytocin massage can serve as a nonpharmacological intervention that supports successful breastfeeding in postpartum mothers.

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