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### Abstract

**Background:** Anxiety is common in patients awaiting surgical procedures. It typically begins as soon as the procedure is planned and continues to the day of surgery. This study sought to evaluate the effectiveness of an evidence-based method called Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT) for anxiety among women undergoing obstetric and gynecological (OBG) surgeries.

**Methods:** Women admitted for OBG surgeries were selected through consecutive sampling. Preinterventional anxiety was assessed using the Modified Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale, which has subscales for psychological and somatic anxiety. Fifty participants meeting the diagnostic criteria for moderate to severe anxiety were randomly assigned to experimental ( $n = 25$ ) and control ( $n = 25$ ) groups. Participants in the experimental group received two 10-minute sessions of EFT, the first session on the day prior to surgery and the second session on the day of surgery. Both groups received treatment as usual (TAU). Post anxiety scores were assessed immediately before participants were shifted to the operating theater.

**Results:** The two groups were similar at baseline. While there was no change in anxiety in the control group, anxiety scores in the EFT group dropped from  $27.28 (\pm 2.47)$  to  $7.60 (\pm 2.00)$  and were highly statistically significant ( $p < 0.0001$ ). Reductions in both psychological and somatic anxiety subscales were also significant ( $p < 0.002$ ).

**Conclusion:** EFT is a simple, cost effective, and evidence-based method that can be used in reducing the anxiety of patients undergoing surgery.

**Keywords:** *Emotional Freedom Techniques, EFT, anxiety, women, obstetrics and gynecology, surgery*

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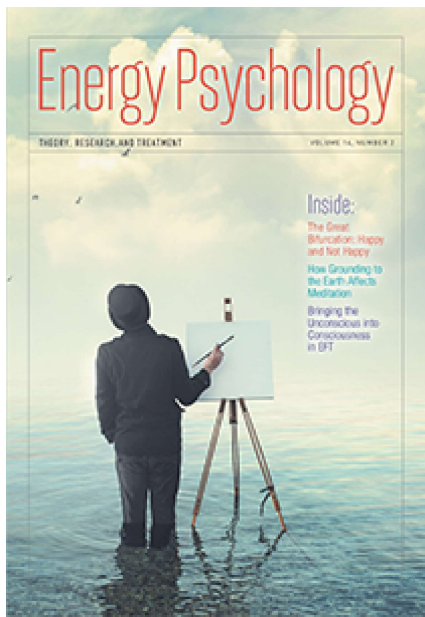


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