

The background is a dark blue gradient with a starry texture. On the left side, there are several overlapping circular patterns. One prominent circle has a scale around its perimeter with numbers ranging from 140 to 260 in increments of 10. Other circles contain dashed lines, arrows, and smaller concentric circles, suggesting a technical or scientific theme.

ANCIENT & MODERN BIRTH TRADITIONS

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DECEMBER 17, 2021

AGENDA

- ancient & modern placenta traditions
- exploring male genital mutilation
- pain management in birth
- references





PLACENTA RITUALS: THEN VS NOW

- Buried placentas
 - Indigenous practices to bury the placenta whole, partial or the umbilical cord outside of the home to ward off evil, provide good luck, or tribute to the Earth
- Lotus Birth
 - Leave the placenta attached to the baby until the cord naturally dries and breaks on its own
 - Belief that the placenta and child share a spiritual connection
- Placentophagy
 - Most common placenta tradition today is to eat the placenta, usually via placental encapsulation
 - Sold by birth workers
- Discard
 - Many parents are unaware of their option to keep the placenta and opt to discard it. Often leaving the placenta for the hospital to sell or donate for study as medical waste
 - Western medical community has considered the afterbirth to be part of the “mess” of childbirth

MALE GENITAL MUTILATION

*For the purpose of this project, I am intentionally referring to the act of surgically altering the neonatal penis as male genital mutilation as this is both a violent and unnecessary act.

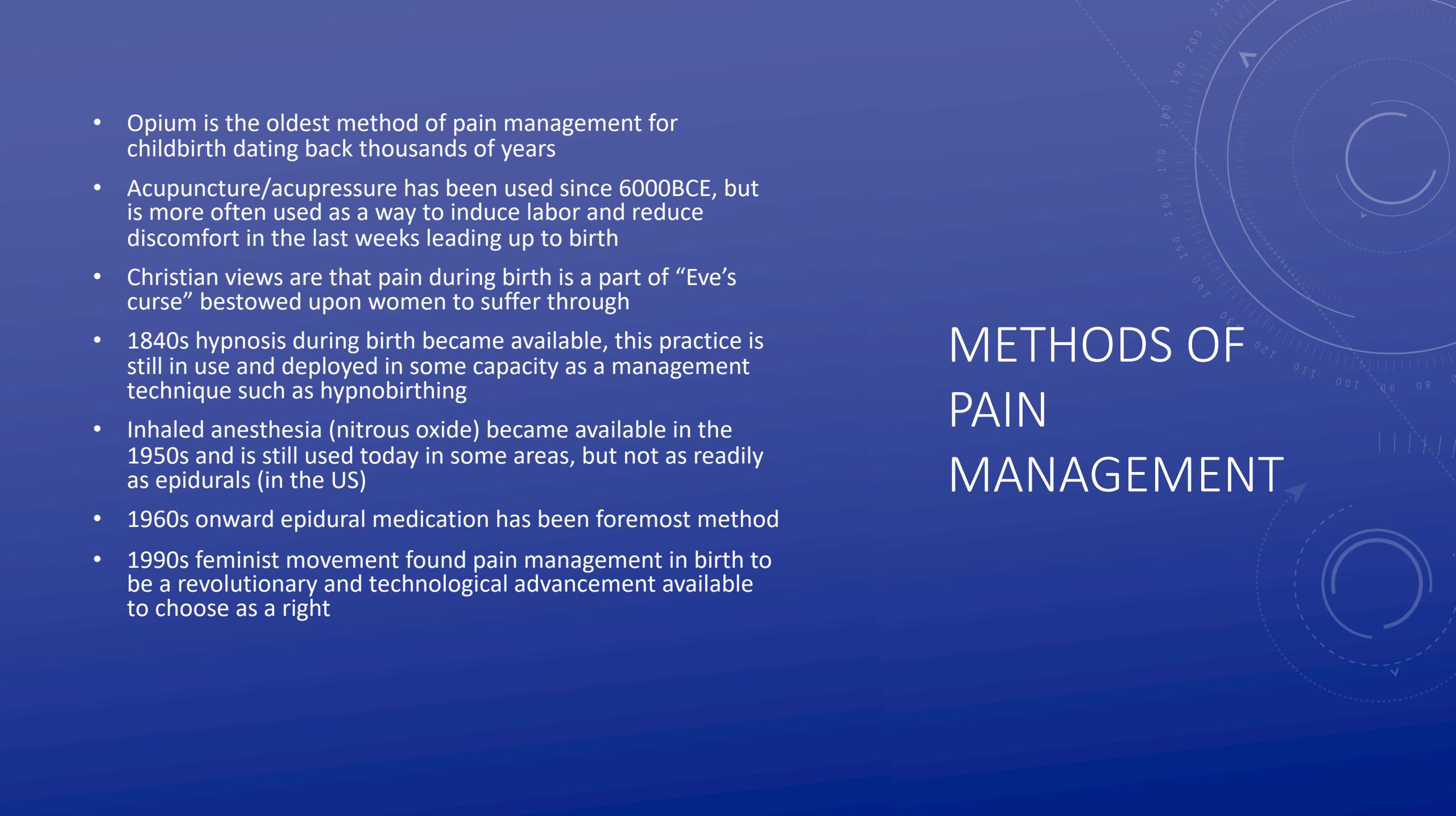
MGM has been practiced by various cultures throughout time, with the oldest evidence of its occurrence from ancient Egyptian tombs more than 4000 years old. Jewish and Muslim people have practiced MGM for thousands of years as well, most likely as a means of better hygiene in desert regions. Christians also practiced MGM as a means of establishing purity of the body. Some African tribes practiced MGM as ritual passages to adulthood, with the procedure conducted sometimes beyond the neonatal period.

According to the WHO as of 2016 the global MGM rate was thought to be 37-39%, with 70% of those persons of Muslim faith. In some areas of Africa more than 90% of the male population have MGM. In America 76-92% of males have had MGM performed on them. There is also a racial correlation (in the US) with 90% of white males, 75% of black males and 44% of Mexican-American males have had MGM performed on them.

The actual practice of MGM varies greatly among cultures, with some African tribes such as the Maasai or in Tanzania leaving the flap of the prepuce still attached to the shaft to promote female clitoral stimulation, whereas in the US the entirety of the prepuce is often removed leaving a “high and tight” appearance. The use of anesthesia greatly varies by culture and practitioner preference, and in some areas antibiotics or antiseptics are not deployed.

- Opium is the oldest method of pain management for childbirth dating back thousands of years
- Acupuncture/acupressure has been used since 6000BCE, but is more often used as a way to induce labor and reduce discomfort in the last weeks leading up to birth
- Christian views are that pain during birth is a part of “Eve’s curse” bestowed upon women to suffer through
- 1840s hypnosis during birth became available, this practice is still in use and deployed in some capacity as a management technique such as hypnobirthing
- Inhaled anesthesia (nitrous oxide) became available in the 1950s and is still used today in some areas, but not as readily as epidurals (in the US)
- 1960s onward epidural medication has been foremost method
- 1990s feminist movement found pain management in birth to be a revolutionary and technological advancement available to choose as a right

METHODS OF PAIN MANAGEMENT



REFERENCES

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