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Kimberly L'Etoile
kimletoile@gmail.com

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Late Preterm Infants Progression of Adaptive Functioning Skills from Age 8 to 23

Kimberly L'Etoile (Biological Sciences, Nursing)

Introduction

Late preterm infants (LPT) are born 34^{0/7} to 36^{6/7} weeks gestation, comprising 71% of preterm infants in the United States. Despite being of similar size and weight to full term (FT) infants, LPT infants exhibit poorer long term outcomes. Using data from a longitudinal Rhode Island cohort of former preterm infants, this study investigated adaptive functioning skills of LPT infants as compared to FT infants at 8 and 23 years.

Materials and methods

- The sample included 30 LPT infants and 40 FT infants
- Results were obtained using t-scores from the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) at 8 years and Adult Self Report (ASR) at 23 years
- Generalized estimating equations (GEE) were used to investigate internalizing, externalizing, total problem behaviors, and DSM-oriented scales.
- GEE was used to model year 23 ASR as a function of GA status and mean adaptive T-score

Results

As adults, LPT subjects were 32 times more likely to exhibit thought problem scores and 13 times more likely to have anxiety scores in the clinical/subclinical range. Based on certain behaviors, the impact of the subject being LPT or FT or having higher or lower adaptability influenced the results. Both LPT and FT infants were less likely to demonstrate internalizing, withdrawn, aggression, somatic, avoidant personality and antisocial personality behaviors at 23 years if the individual had high adaptive functioning scores.

Conclusions

Findings indicate it is beneficial to improve LPT and FT infants' adaptive functioning skills to decrease other problem behaviors over time.

While some problem behaviors may not be prevalent early in life, they may develop later in life, which indicates the importance of close follow-up of all infants.

References:

Advisor: Amy D'Agata

ref: NHNNRR01NR003695

Statistician: Mary B Roberts, MS