



Quality of life and functional outcome in early school-aged children after neonatal stroke: A prospective cohort study

Submitted by Marie-Françoise... on Tue, 01/20/2015 - 16:47

Titre	Quality of life and functional outcome in early school-aged children after neonatal stroke: A prospective cohort study
Type de publication	Article de revue
Auteur	Darteyre, S. [1], Renaud, C. [2], Vuillerot, C. [3], Presles, Emilie [4], Kossorotoff, M. [5], Dinomais, Mickaël [6], Lazaro, L. [7], Gautheron, V. [8], Chabrier, Stéphane [9]
Editeur	Elsevier
Type	Article scientifique dans une revue à comité de lecture
Année	2014
Langue	Anglais
Date	05/2014
Numéro	3
Pagination	347-353
Volume	18
Titre de la revue	European Journal of Paediatric Neurology
ISSN	1090-3798

Résumé en anglais

Background
Quality of life (QoL) is recognized internationally as an efficient tool for evaluating health interventions. To our knowledge, QoL has not been specifically assessed in children after neonatal arterial ischemic stroke (AIS).

Aim
To study the QoL of early school-aged children who suffered from neonatal AIS, and QoL correlation to functional outcome.

Method
We conducted a multicenter prospective cohort study as part of a larger study in full-term newborns with symptomatic AIS. Participating families were sent anonymous QoL questionnaires (QUALIN). Functional outcome was measured using the Wee-FIM scale. Healthy controls in the same age range were recruited in public schools. Their primary caregivers filled in the QUALIN questionnaires anonymously. We used Student's t-test and a rank test to compare patients and controls' QoL and functional outcomes.

Results
84 children with neonatal AIS were included. The control group was composed of 74 children, of which ten were later excluded due to chronic conditions. Mean ages and QUALIN median scores did not differ between patients and controls. Median Wee-FIM scores were lower in hemiplegic children than in non-hemiplegic ones ($p < 0.001$). QoL scores did not seem correlated to functional outcome.

Interpretation
Those results could support the presence of a "disability paradox" in young children following neonatal AIS.

URL de la notice <http://okina.univ-angers.fr/publications/ua6761> [10]
DOI [10.1016/j.ejpn.2014.01.006](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejpn.2014.01.006) [11]
Lien vers le document <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ejpn.2014.01.006> [11]

Liens

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- [11] <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ejpn.2014.01.006>

Publié sur *Okina* (<http://okina.univ-angers.fr>)