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Etiologies, comorbidities and causes of death in a population of 133 polyhandicapped patients cared for at specialist rehabilitation centres

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Keywords: Polyhandicap; Death; Comorbidities

Objective: To investigate causes of death and age at death in cerebral palsy (CP) subjects compared with the general population.

Method: Analysis of data supplied by the Centre of Epidemiology on the Medical Causes of Death was conducted. Three thousand and thirty-one death certificates indicating a diagnosis of CP were reported between 2000 and 2008.

Results: Median age at death was between 45–54 years and principal cause comprised the category 'Symptoms, signs, and abnormal results of clinical and laboratory tests, not classified elsewhere'. Of these, 66% were related to the circulatory and respiratory systems. 'Diseases of the respiratory system' was the second most common cause of death. The third most common cause was 'Diseases of the circulatory system'. The tumour pathologies were only the fourth cause of death.

Discussion: These results concur with other published data, i.e. subjects with CP die younger than the French general population, and the principal causes of death are respiratory and circulatory problems.

Further reading


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Cognitive disorders in adults with cerebral palsy


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Keywords: Cerebral palsy; Cognitive disorders

Objective: Just a few data have been published on the cognitive functioning of adults with cerebral palsy. Given this situation, the Breizh Network dedicated to Cerebral Palsy conducted a pilot study with the objective to establish the cognitive profile of this population and to identify the most sensitive assessment tests.

Method: Nineteen patients with a mean age of 27.61 [18–51], were recruited into the study [level from college to Bac +2]. All expressed moderate cognitive complaints. They spent the following neuropsychological tests: WAIS -III, RL -RI 16 items, Stroop, TMT, Rey Figure, PASAT, 6 elements. Emotional and depressive status was also assessed.

Results and discussion: According to the results, the cognitive profile of PCI adult patients is characterized by a sharp slowdown in processing speed, and visuoconstructional ability and working memory impairment. In addition, a correlation was observed between processing speed and educational level. The Processing Speed Index (IVT) may be a predictor test for educational orientation. Added to this is a significant weakening of the Performance Intelligence Quotient (PIQ) relative to verbal IQ (VIQ) was noticed and this regardless of grade level.

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The qualitative assessment of general movements in preterm infants with small for gestational age or abnormal echo image: Pilot study

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Keywords: Preterm; Small for gestational age; Brain echo; General movement

Objective: Identifying neurological deficits accompanying with the preterm infants is important but remains a challenging task. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships of a relatively new method, the assessment of general movements (GMs), with two risk factors, abnormal brain echo findings and small for gestational age (SGA).

Material and methods: Twenty-one preterm infants were included: five were SGA, five with abnormal brain echo, and one with both diagnoses. Video recordings were taken once before 38 weeks of gestational age and once at withering period. Correlation between GMs and abnormal brain echo and SGA were determined using Spearman’s correlation coefficient.

Results: In preterm and withering period, half of the preterm infants without SGA or abnormal echo had abnormal GMs. One and 4 out of 6 infants with SGA had abnormal GMs in preterm period and withering periods, respectively.

Discussion: Abnormal GMs were not necessarily related to brain echo and SGA. Some studies considered that early abnormal GMs might be caused by transient abnormalities, which explained why the preterm infants without abnormal echo or SGA demonstrated abnormal GMs.