

A preterm high risk newborn group carried out a neurological – psychological follow –up: analysis of the first data.

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Advanced in neonatology have led to an increased survival of very preterm infants. To evaluate the effects of prematurity the neurodevelopmental outcome of these infants is closely monitored in order to know how this particular newborn population grows up and in order to analyze the potential interactions between the preterm birth and possible risks factors (social risk factor) . In order to fully understand this phenomenon it is necessary to have a clear identification of the study's sample characteristics, of the evaluation instruments, as well as of the matching between the different data.

For this purpose we have planned, in the course of the newborn's first year of life, a neurological - psychological follow - up for a particular infant population. The sample is made up of 40 infants with less than 37 weeks of gestational age and with a birth weight ≤ 1300 grams or ≥ 1300 grams but associated to "serious complications" (neurological and/or pulmonary).

In this paper the follow - up steps are accurately described together with the type of instruments employed for the assessments. The infant assessments include: infant neurological-behavioral evaluation, mental and psychomotor development evaluation, appraisal of infant psychological development and also assessment of the parent - child relation and analysis of possible environmental risk factors.

The preliminary data, still in phase of collection and elaboration, confirm the most recent studies (Singer et al., 2003) concerning infants <1500 grams and affected by neurological and respiratory diseases. These studies also investigate the relationships between parental emotional states, parental behavior and neuro-psychological outcomes of the children.

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