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Can Feeding Interventions Help Children With Cerebral Palsy?

What is this research about?

Most children with cerebral palsy (CP) have trouble eating, especially as infants and young children. There are 5 main ways of addressing feeding issues:

1. Doing exercises to strengthen the muscles needed to eat.
2. Using certain positions that stabilize the neck and body.
3. Feeding the infant soft food rather than solid food.
4. Employing tools like the Innsbruck Sensorimotor Activator and Regulator.
5. Using a feeding device.

To speed up feeding, positioning and soft food can help. For long-term improvements, using an oral appliance or doing exercises are best.

What did the researchers do?

A literature review on the different feeding interventions for children with CP was done. Articles had to meet criteria to be included in the study. 12 databases were searched for

What you need to know:

Most children with cerebral palsy have feeding issues. In the short term, there is an increased risk of choking. In the long term, ongoing feeding issues can lead to children being underweight and undernourished. Finding the most effective tools to help children with CP with feeding issues will be important to their quality of life.

relevant articles. Then the methodology of each article was examined. Only studies with strong methodologies were included. A total of 21 studies were reviewed. More weight was given to studies with more rigorous methodologies.

What did the researchers find?

Different feeding issues require different types of solutions. The research on effective solutions is currently lacking. There is evidence to suggest that doing sensory motor exercises, giving soft food, or using an oral appliance might help speed up feeding and decrease the risk of choking.

How can you use this research?

Practitioners will learn about the effective tools for helping children who have CP improve their ability to eat.

Policy makers will learn about the need for further research into effective tools for problems with eating.

About the Researchers

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Cerebral palsy, Feeding interventions, Children

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