

What developmental screening procedures exist?

childhood
disability
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Summary

Developmental screening: Refers to the process of systematically identifying children with a suspected delay who need further assessment.

This review article focuses on the topic of developmental screening in pediatric practice. Developmental screening specifically refers to the process of systematically identifying children with a suspected delay who need further detailed assessment. It is known that screening tests greatly improve the rate of identification, and a variety of such screening tests are now available. These include those administered by a health professional and those completed by a parent. Developmental screening as a practice strategy has been endorsed by most professional pediatric organizations. In this paper the properties of screening tests and current developmental screening tools were systematically reviewed. It is apparent from the literature that no single developmental screening tool is most effective in all settings nor is a developmental screening strategy yet apparent that can be rationally endorsed. Thus much research remains to be done in this particular area.

What families should know

A practice of ongoing developmental surveillance needs to be incorporated into routine childcare. This may involve use of screening tools as well as observations over time by the practice provider.

What practitioners should know

No specific developmental screening strategy can be endorsed in all clinical settings. Primary practice physicians need to be mindful of limitations of developmental screening tools.

Reference

[Rydz, D., Shevell, M.I., & Majnemer, A. Developmental screening. \[topical review in *Journal of Child Neurology*\], 20, 4-21.](#)