

Is the neurobehavioral assessment of preterm infants a valid measure of neurobehavioral status?

childhood
disability
LINK



Glossary of terms

Neurobehavior status: Neurobehavior status describes the status of a person's physical behaviors in relation to damage to parts of the brain.

Summary

The main aim of this study was to find out if the clinical measure called the Neurobehavioral Assessment of Preterm Infants is measuring the attributes of preterm infants that it claims to be measuring (i.e. neurobehavioral status). We expected that neurobehavioral status would be somewhat related to an infant's physical status as they mature. This study indeed demonstrated that the Neurobehavioral Assessment of Preterm Infants does accurately measure physiological status as preterm infants mature (when they are tested at around 32 weeks gestational age – or 2 months premature), however it becomes a less reliable measure as the infants become more physiologically stable (when they are tested around 36 gestational age – or 1 month premature).

What families should know

The neurobehavioral status of premature infants under 36 weeks of age can be accurately assessed by a test called Neurobehavioral Assessment of Preterm Infants. If you are concerned about your child's development and behavior, this assessment may be used by a development specialist to evaluate your child's neurobehavioral status.

What practitioners should know

Using a validated assessment that accurately measures neonatal neurobehavioral status over time reflects the use of 'best practice' which facilitates clinical reasoning for appropriate interventions.

Reference

[Snider, L., Tremblay, S., Limperopoulos, C., Majnemer, A., Filion, F., & Johnston, C. \(2005\). Construct validity of the neurobehavioral assessment of preterm infants. *Physical & Occupation Therapy in Pediatrics, 25*, 81-95.](#)

