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Nurses' Knowledge of Deformational Plagiocephaly and Discharge Instructions for Its Prevention

Kanlaya Dittthakasem, MNS, RN, CCRP

Department of Clinical Research, Medical City Children's Hospital, Dallas, TX, USA

Morley Herbert, PhD

Clinical Research, Medical City Dallas, DALLAS, TX, USA

Jennifer Hill, MHA, BSN, RN

Medical City Children's Hospital, DALLAS, TX, USA

Zepure Samawi, PhD, RN

School of Nursing, Saint Xavier University, Chicago, IL, USA

Background: Deformational plagiocephaly (DP) is the most common head shape abnormality in infants, and describes flattening that is on only one side of the head. DP has become more prevalent in infants and has significantly increased, since the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Task Force on Infant Positioning and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) recommended that infants sleep in a supine position in 1992. DP can be prevented by educating parents and caregivers about the importance of tummy time (TT). However, our previous research study on parental information, knowledge and understanding of the importance of tummy time for preventing DP, showed that most parents (74%) do not have a good understanding of the importance of TT and have not received adequate information about starting TT on the first day after they return home for preventing this condition.

Purpose: To explore and describe obstetrical, neonatal and pediatric nurses' self-reported knowledge, practice, and provision of parental education regarding DP and discharge instructions for its prevention.

Methods: A cross-sectional descriptive study design was used to survey a convenience sample of 309 obstetrical, neonatal and pediatric nurses who work at a 801-bed tertiary-care hospital in Dallas, TX. The data were collected over a 6-week period in August 2018, using a 40-item investigator designed and Internet-based questionnaire.

Results: A total of 122 surveys were analyzed, with a response rate of 39.4% (122/309). The finding indicated that most of nurses answered the questions about DP correctly and nurses' self-reported general knowledge of DP seemed to be adequate. However, they had inadequate knowledge on preventive measures, and were less knowledgeable about when to start TT. They did not routinely discuss the AAP's recommendations with parents/or caregivers during discharge teaching; only 21% of the nurses reported they always told parents or caregivers that tummy time should start on their first day home from the hospital while infants are awake and supervised.

Conclusions: More than half of the nurses (55%) had inadequate knowledge about when to start TT for prevention of DP. Only 21 % of the nurses routinely provide discharge instructions that promote TT at home to prevent DP. This study indicates that nursing discharge teaching on practices to prevent DP are inconsistent; there are gaps in practice and in conflict with the AAP's recommendations.

Title:

Nurses' Knowledge of Deformational Plagiocephaly and Discharge Instructions for Its Prevention

Keywords:

Deformational plagiocephaly, Nursing practices and Parental education

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Abstract Summary:

Deformational plagiocephaly (DP) is the most common head shape abnormality in infants, and has become more prevalent in infants and has significantly increased since 1992. This study describes obstetrical, neonatal and pediatric nurses' self-reported knowledge, practice, and provision of parental education regarding DP and discharge instructions for its prevention.

Content Outline:

Abstract

Background

Deformational plagiocephaly (DP) is the most common head shape abnormality in infants, and describes flattening that is on only one side of the head. DP has become more prevalent in infants and has significantly increased, since the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Task Force on Infant Positioning and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) recommended that infants sleep in a supine position in 1992. DP can be prevented by educating parents and caregivers about the importance of tummy time (TT). However, our previous research study on parental information, knowledge and understanding of the importance of tummy time for preventing DP, showed that most parents (74%) do not have a good understanding of the importance of TT and have not received adequate information about starting TT on the first day after they return home for preventing this condition.

Objective

To explore and describe obstetrical, neonatal and pediatric nurses' self-reported knowledge, practice, and provision of parental education regarding DP and discharge instructions for its prevention.

Methods

A cross-sectional descriptive study design was used to survey a convenience sample of 309 obstetrical, neonatal and pediatric nurses who work at a 801-bed tertiary-care hospital in Dallas, TX. The data were collected over a 6-week period in August 2018, using a 40-item investigator designed and Internet-based questionnaire.

Results

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Conclusions

More than half of the nurses (55%) had inadequate knowledge about when to start TT for prevention of DP. Only 21 % of the nurses routinely provide discharge instructions that promote TT at home to prevent DP. This study indicates that nursing discharge teaching on practices to prevent DP are inconsistent; there are gaps in practice and in conflict with the AAP's recommendations.

First Primary Presenting Author

Primary Presenting Author

Kanlaya Ditthakasem, MNS, RN, CCRP
Medical City Children's Hospital
Department of Clinical Research
Craniofacial Research Nurse
Dallas TX
USA

Author Summary: Ms. Kanlaya Ditthakasem, MNS, RN, CCRP is a Research Nurse at the Craniofacial Center at Medical City Children's Hospital. Ms. Ditthakasem has expertise in pediatric care, and experience with children with craniofacial birth defects. She has continuously engaged in craniofacial research projects. She has numerous publications in peer-reviewed journal and is a regular presenter at local, regional, national and international conferences.

Second Author

Morley Herbert, PhD
Medical City Dallas
Clinical Research
Biostatistician
DALLAS TX
USA

Author Summary: Dr. Herbert has more than 40 years of experience in research. He regularly carries out statistical analysis for research projects, as well as for clinical departments of hospital, using SAS statistical package. Consult with departments and personnel on statistical matters. He has published more than 200 papers in peer-reviewed journals. He is also a reviewer of articles for Annals of Thoracic Surgery, and International Journal for Quality in Health Care.

Third Author

Jennifer Hill, MHA, BSN, RN
Medical City Children's Hospital
Assistant Vice President of Clinical Services
DALLAS TX
USA

Author Summary: Jennifer Hill, MHA, BSN, RN is an Assistant Vice President of Clinical Services at Medical City Children's Hospital. Ms. Hill currently manages approximately 350 employees including 5 managers and is responsible for the 24 hour clinical operations of the Children's Hospital which includes Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU), Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), Congenital Heart Surgical Unit (CHSU), and 2 General Pediatric floors at Medical City Children's Hospital.

Fourth Secondary Presenting Author

Corresponding Secondary Presenting Author

Zepure Samawi, PhD, RN
Saint Xavier University
School of Nursing
Professor and Associate Dean Undergraduate Nursing
Chicago IL
USA

Author Summary: Professor and Associate Dean for Undergraduate Nursing, Saint Xavier University, received a Fulbright Scholar Grant to teach and perform research at Bethlehem University in Palestine. Introduce concept mapping teaching and learning methodology, taught pediatric nursing and nursing research. Visited Jordan and spent weeks in two major universities in Jordan doing workshops on nursing pedagogy. Recognized by the Illinois Board of Higher Education with a Nurse Educator Fellowship and Nursing Research Award from Sigma Theta Tau.

