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Developmentally Supportive Care (DSC) of preterm infants in neonatal ICU

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The neurodevelopment outcomes of preterm babies has always been a concern. The third trimester of fetal development and even in early infancy the brain is drastically changing with new brain cell production, migration, synaptic pruning and brain organization but preterm infants get typically exposed to painful procedures, excessive light and noise exposure, interrupted sleep and separation from mother. Children born preterm are at a greater risk for learning disabilities, low IQ (intelligence Quotient), ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) and neuropsychological deficit. They may display deficits in visual motor integration, executive function, temperament, language and emotional regulation. Developmentally supportive care are set of interventions designed to minimize the stress of NICU environment. These interventions include elements such as control of external stimuli (auditory, visual, tactile, vestibular), clustering of nursing care activities to avoid disrupting sleep, positioning or swaddling of the preterm infant and calming techniques. The core measures of DSC are protected sleep, pain and

stress assessment and management, activities of daily living (positioning, feeding and skin care), family centered care, and lastly the healing environment. DSC supports autonomic stability, normal motor, sensory, neurological development and promotes behavioral state organization. It also decreases length of hospital stay, improves weight gain and shortens the time to full enteral feeding. The goal is to reduce developmental dysfunctions in preterm infants, improve functional outcomes and have positive neurodevelopment outcomes.

Speaker Biography

Himani Narula Khanna completed her post graduation in Pediatrics at the age of 27 years from Nagpur University, India. She did further postdoctoral course in developmental Pediatrics from Kerala University, India. She is a Director and Co Founder of Continua Kids a Chain of Child developmental centers in North India. She has experience of more than 15 years in the field of Pediatrics. She has presented her research in the form of posters and oral paper presentations in various national and International conferences.

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