

Feeding Difficulties and Somnolence in a 4-week-old Newborn Whose Mother Had Depressive Symptoms

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Introduction:

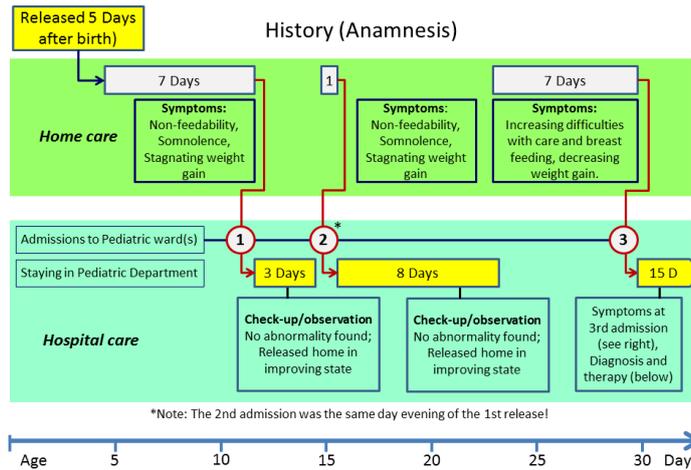
- Regulation disorders in early childhood usually occur as nutritional and sleeping difficulties.
- The examination of parents' mental state is essential to evaluate the baby's status.
- The aim of our study was to introduce the necessity of using mental state questionnaires in the clinical routine

Case report:

Birth: From 1st pregnancy, at gestation week 40, by Caesarean section due to intrauterine asphyxia; birth weight: 4.810 g;

Apgar status: 8/10.

Breast feeding: With difficulty from the beginning, with assistance.



| Infant's status | Mother's status |
|---|---|
| Somnolent, exsiccated; internal organs negative; neurological status characterised by hypotonia and conspicuous lack of facial expression. Looks at face for a short time, no smile or cry. | The look of mother's face was rigid and she told us that she did not believe in the recovery of her baby. |
| Feeding: Refused breast feeding, fed from nursing bottle slowly and with difficulty, then spat up frequently. | In determining the diagnosis, the mental state of the mother was measured by a validated Hungarian questionnaire. |

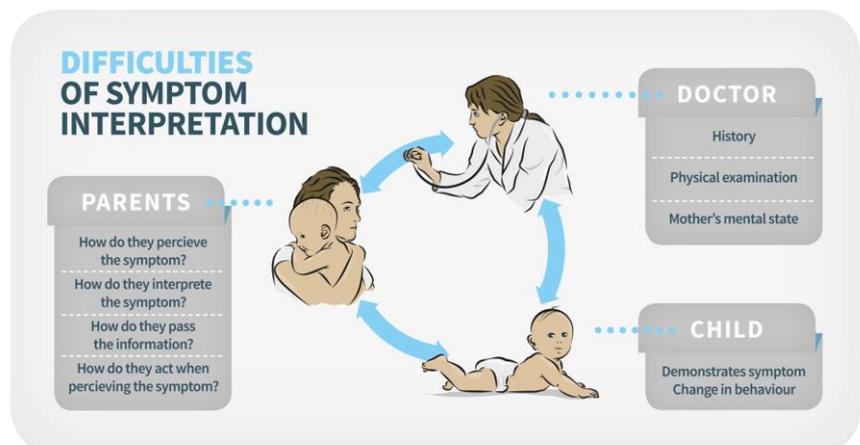
Diagnosis/Therapy

It was verified that the baby had gastro oesophageal reflux (GOR) and *Helicobacter pylori* infection as well as a muscle tone disorder. The mother was referred to psychologist, who diagnosed her with depression and started to give her treatment. To treat the newborn's organic diseases, medication and physiotherapy were used combined with parent-infant consultations. The newborn became progressively more active and able to breastfeed. Her muscle tone improved as well. In the mother's mental state, fair signs were shown.

Discussion:

- The leading symptoms of the clinical condition were refusal of food, somnolence and muscular hypotonia, which could have suggested a serious internal or neurological condition.
- In this case, the infant, who had had difficulties with breast feeding and arousability since birth and whose mother was suffering from depression, was diagnosed with an internal disease.
- Recognition of the mother's mental state closely related to the infant's behaviour and emotional control was essential for the interpretation and evaluation of the symptoms.

Difficulties of symptom interpretation



Conclusion:

- In the organic symptoms of infants, screening the mothers' mental state is important in addition to the child's physical examination.
- Rehabilitating a mother's mental state is needed in order to successfully treat the infants.