Global Imaging Insights

Image

ISSN: 2399-7397

Sensorial saturation: A new approach to babies' pain

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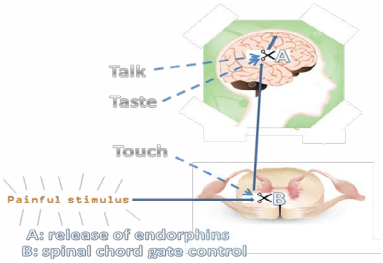

Figure 1. The simultaneous use of touch, voice and taste stimulation, inhibits pain to attain the brain during common painful procedures. This is due to endorphin release in the brain and to neuronal gate-control in the spinal cord. Babies feel pain more than adults, and common strategies, like the isolated use of oral sugar, are not effective enough.

Figure 2. Preparatory stage of the "sensorial saturation" procedure: holding the baby. The baby is contained and the sheet tucked before the procedure.

Figure 3.

a) First stage: sweet taste. Oral sugar (0.1-1 ml of 33% glucose in sterile water) and a pacifier are offered to the baby, provoking the sucking reflex for 30 seconds before and throughout the procedure

b) Second stage: talk and touch. The baby is massaged and his nurse or his mother talks to him, attracting his attention, while suction is still elicited: this begins 30 seconds before the heel-prick, and continues throughout.

c) Third stage: sight and sucking. When the baby is staring and the sucking becomes regular (1 suction/second), the painful procedure (in this case a heel lancing) can be performed.

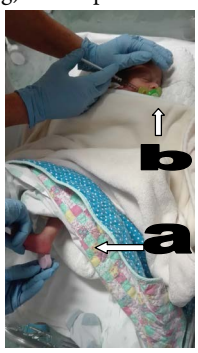

Figure 4. The painful procedure is now painless, the foot can be lanced (a) without pain signals (b), as it emerges from several research papers.

Consent

All the pictures have been taken and published with the express approval of the baby's parents.

A video clip of the procedure is available at the following URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hu6Xdy7LIAQ

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Received: November 07, 2016; **Accepted:** November 11, 2016; **Published:** November 14, 2016