

Effects Of Early Physiotherapy On Family Needs and Mother's Quality Of Life In Infants With Down Syndrome

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Introduction: Down syndrome is the most common autosomal disorder resulting from a genetic discrepancy. Mothers face some problems and stress during the early stages of Down syndrome. The aim of this study was to examine effects of early physiotherapy applied on infants with Down syndrome at an early stage on family needs and life quality of mothers.

Patients And Method: Twenty-three cases (10 females, 13 males) with a diagnosis of Down syndrome between 0 and 2 years of age were included in study. Demographic data such as maternal age, education level, occupational status, income level, and social security were saved. Children's motor skills were evaluated by Alberta Infant Motor Profile. Physiotherapy programs were applied for 2 weeks, 1 hour sessions per day, for 6 weeks. The Family Needs Assessment Tool was used to define family needs, the Beck Depression Inventory was used to assess mothers' depression levels, and the Nottingham Health Profile was used to evaluate mothers' quality of life. All assessments were made before and after treatment program.

Results: Pretreatment and posttreatment scores of assessments were compared with Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test (t-test). Motor skills of children showed a statistically significant improvement compared to pretreatment ($p < 0.05$). Requirements of parents decreased with all subfactors in comparison to pretreatment ($p < 0.05$). Similarly, depressive levels of mothers were statistically significantly decreased ($p < 0.05$). There was a significant increase in quality of life of mothers compared to pretreatment ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusion: Six-week early physiotherapy program improved motor skills of 0 to 2-year-old children with Down syndrome, increasing quality of life of these children's mothers while decreasing their depression levels and family needs.