

Fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol effects among children in a secondary nutritional recovery centre

Síndrome de alcoholismo fetal y efectos del alcohol sobre el feto: Importancia del diagnóstico precoz y del manejo nutricional

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Background: Fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) and fetal alcohol effects (FAE) encompass a pattern of birth defects in persons whose mothers ingested alcohol during pregnancy. People with FAE display fewer of the FAS traits. **Aim:** To assess the prevalence and features of these affections in a secondary nutritional recovery centre. **Patients and methods:** All charts of children admitted between 1985 and 1995 were reviewed, and those children diagnosed as having a FAS or FAE by a geneticist were considered for this study. Birth, maternal, social and economic characteristics, psychomotor abilities (using Denver test) and response to nutritional treatment were assessed. **Results:** During the study period, 1572 infants were admitted to the centre, and 1.97% (70% female) were diagnosed as having a FAS or FAE. These infants were admitted at 11.1 ± 4.5 months of age and discharged after 96.7 ± 58.1 months of hospitalisation. Mean mother's age was 33 ± 7 years, and all belonged to low socioeconomic levels