

BENEFITS OF USE OF HUMAN MILK FORTIFIER IN PRETERM INFANTS IN THE COMMUNITY PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE FROM A CASE STUDY SERIES

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Presented at ESPEN 2023

Introduction:

Breast milk supplementation with a multicomponent human milk fortifier (HMF) has been shown to be safe and effective in preterm infants during hospitalization, while there is little clinical evidence exploring its use in the community. This series of case-studies aimed to evaluate HMF use in preterm infants in the community.

Method:

Preterm infants experiencing faltering growth were recruited from two UK neonatal units and supplemented with a new HMF containing long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids, medium-chain fatty acids, and beta-palmitate (Nutriprem HMF, Nutricia Ltd). Compliance with prescription, anthropometrics, gastrointestinal (GI) tolerance, acceptability and safety were recorded at baseline, and end of intervention.

Results:

Fourteen infants (8 males), aged 35weeks+4days (SD 2w+5d), were supplemented with HMF in the community (mean intake 6.2g/d (SD2.6), 26.8kcal/d (SD11.4)) for a mean of 29days (SD2, range 15-55days), with 2 infants being initiated at home and 12 continuing after hospital discharge. Mean compliance was 96% (SD13), with 13 infants consuming 100% of HMF prescribed by their healthcare professional (HCP). Infants showed an increase in mean weight (+1.14kg SD0.58), length (+6.66cm SD3.91) and head circumference (+4.35cm SD2.86), and 93% (n=13) met their growth goal at the end of intervention. HMF was well tolerated, with 4 infants experiencing no GI symptoms and 10 infants experiencing a few symptoms with no significant concerns. HCPs reported satisfaction with GI tolerance in 11/14 (79%) infants. Most parents (11/14; 79%) found HMF easy to use and were satisfied overall.

Conclusion:

The HMF was well complied with, tolerated and accepted by most parents for supporting ongoing growth of preterm infants in the community.