

Early Intervention in Infants with Postural Asymmetry: A Case Series Using Vojta Therapy and Future Directions of the SymBaby Project

Authors: Blanka Vlčková¹, Pospíšilová Lenka², Šafářová Marcela¹, Carbajo Anna¹, Jačisko Jakub¹, Kobesová Alena¹

1. Department of Rehabilitation and Sports Medicine, Second Faculty of Medicine, Charles University and University Hospital Motol and Homolka, Prague, Czech Republic, V Úvalu 84, Prague 5, 159 00
2. RL-Corpus, Specialized rehabilitation outpatient clinic, Olomouc, Czech Republic

Background

Infantile postural asymmetry (IPA) is a common disorder of early motor development, typically manifesting as asymmetric head and trunk posture during early infancy. Various therapeutic approaches are used in clinical practice, including positioning strategies, manual therapy, osteopathy, and neurodevelopmental methods. However, systematic outcome evaluation in very young infants remains limited, particularly with regard to standardized assessment tools.

Objectives

The objectives of this contribution are to present a case series evaluating the effects of Vojta Therapy (VT) in infants with IPA using the Philippi Scale, and to present future research directions and the framework of the SymBaby project aimed at standardized assessment and longitudinal monitoring of infants with postural asymmetry.

Methods

Four infants aged 6–10 weeks, referred by paediatricians for asymmetric head and trunk posture, were included in the study. VT was applied according to clinical indications. Postural asymmetry was assessed using the Philippi Scale at three time points: before the start of therapy, after six weeks of intervention, and immediately after final therapy session. The Philippi scale evaluates asymmetry across four items on a six-point scale, with total scores ranging from 4 (complete symmetry) to 24 (maximum asymmetry).

Results

All infants showed clinically relevant improvement over the observation period. Total Philippi score reductions were 9 points (16 → 7), 8 points (21 → 13), 18 points (23 → 5), and 10 points (15 → 5). Improvements were observed not only in reduced head and trunk asymmetry but also in upper limb support quality and overall postural stability.

Conclusion

This case series highlights the potential benefits of early VT intervention in infants with IPA and supports the Philippi Scale as a feasible tool for outcome assessment in early infancy. Based on these preliminary findings, the SymBaby project aims to establish a multicentre prospective randomized controlled trial for standardized evaluation of infants with postural asymmetry, contributing to evidence-based early physiotherapy practice.

Reference:

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