

Early spontaneous movement and communicative development: What does movement tell us about interaction in the first few months of life?

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ABSTRACT

The analysis of spontaneous movements in newborn children has proven to be a powerful predictor of potential difficulties in motor development. The General Movements assessment protocol proposed by Prechtl (Prechtl et al., 1993) allows the prediction of cerebral palsy with a high level of specificity. Recent research has begun to highlight the relationship between early spontaneous movement and later communicative development. In this study, we analyse the relationship between objective characteristics of spontaneous movement analysed using motion detection software and early interactive behaviours with caregivers. We examine every two weeks the spontaneous movement of children with typical development from 9 weeks post-term until 15 weeks post-term age, and we also observe the interaction with their caregivers in their natural context until they reach 6 months of age. We analyse how differences in the evolution of spontaneous movement are reflected in the characteristics of interaction with primary caregivers, in terms of multimodality, responsiveness and synchrony.

Keywords: ; multimodality, spontaneous movement, general movements assessment, synchrony;