

## PREPARING CAREGIVERS TO UNDERSTAND FEEDING DIFFICULTIES IN BABIES WITH CLEFT LIP AND PALATE

PINTO MDB\*\*\*, Dutka JCR, Oliveira RP

Laboratório de Fonética, Hospital de Reabilitação de Anomalias Craniofaciais -  
HRAC-USP, Bauru/SP

**OBJECTIVE:** The birth of a baby with cleft lip and palate (CLP) is a difficult moment for parents and caregivers, particularly at the presence of feeding difficulties. The objective of this project was to develop a material to describe the feeding process of newborns with CLP and to present feeding strategies to facilitate parents and caregivers' role in assuring an adequate and safe feeding process. **METHOD:** A literature search revealed no materials specifically prepared to guide parents regarding suction and swallowing of newborns with and without CLP in the Portuguese language. Information reported by caretakers regarding difficulties of babies with CLP during feeding was identified and narrated in the format of an educational script. **RESULTS:** Images and videos describing the process and illustrating the strategies to facilitate feeding babies with CLP were used to create a power point material for caretakers. An analogy of the vocal tract to a two-story house and an experience of sucking a straw with holes of different sizes were used to address the expected modification needed in sucking and swallowing at the presence of CLP. **CONCLUSION:** A material developed addressing the feeding adaptations undergone by babies with CLP. Strategies to facilitate the adjustments needed regarding position, equipment and procedures to assure a safe and pleasurable feeding were provided.

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