

Challenges Facing the Preterm Infant: Transition to Oral Feed

Student Investigator: Ashley Sakumura

Mentor: Steven Barlow

Thirteen percent of live births are preterm. Many infants end up staying in the NICU for many weeks or even months because they are not able to feed orally. This study covers the rate of transition to oral feed amongst three groups of preterm infants including healthy infants, respiratory distress syndrome, and chronic lung disease. The study also covered the difference in PMA of the infants as they were able to transition to oral feed. The healthy infants had the fastest rate of transition to oral feed while the chronic lung had the slowest rate. There was also a significant difference in the PMA of the three groups. This is just the beginning of research in the area of preterm infants and suck development, there is much more to be explored. [Research supported by a grant from the National Institutes of Health R01 DC003311 (Barlow-PI)]