The Hypothyroxinaemia of Prematurity

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Transient hypothyroxinaemia of prematurity (THOP) is common. The preponderance of evidence indicates that at the very least THOP is a marker of elevated risk of neurodevelopmental adversity. Existing observational and experimental studies could neither support nor dispute the use of thyroid hormones in preterm infants. The experimental studies39-42 done so far had major limitations because of the small number of infants enrolled in the trials. For future large multicenter randomized trials, energies should be focused on assessing neurodevelopment objectively in survivors and consider enrolling only those infants most likely to benefit from thyroid hormones replacement therapy. Moreover, the addition of triiodothyronine (T3) to the treatment schedule needs to be seriously considered. Furthermore, since local pilot study revealed iodine deficiency in 35.8% of the studied healthy pregnant women3 and the effect of iodine deficiency may probably be more significant in preterms, one will probably choose to treat. (HK J Paediatr (new series) 2002;7:25-32)

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