

Breastfeeding and Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome

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Abstract

Feeding is one of the most complex tasks we ask of infants, even healthy full term infants. The incidence and prevalence of infants and children is much higher than most people realize. With a number of 25-45% in typically developing children, and as high as 30-80% in children with developmental disorders. Infants who are premature also carry a much higher risk of having feeding/swallowing difficulties.

With collaboration with a Speech-Language Pathologist, infants and children who are diagnosed early and receive services can assist in breaking the cycle of continuous feeding difficulties for these children and their families to manage. The Speech Language Pathologist who is trained in feeding and swallowing difficulties can provide evaluation and treatment of infants and children who present with a multitude of symptoms with indication of possible feeding difficulties. Some of these symptoms include: GI symptoms (including vomiting, gagging, difficulty with bowel movements, refluxing, etc.), Respiratory Symptoms (including pneumonia, chronic cough, chronic respiratory infections, ear infections, etc.),Dysphagia Symptoms (including difficulty chewing foods, initiating a swallow, oral holding, excessive drooling, coughing/choking during eating/drinking, anterior loss, noisy/wet vocal quality or breathing during or after feeding). After a thorough evaluation of the infant or child, the SLP will work in conjunction with a team of referrals to determine possible etiology of feeding difficulties.

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Biography

Amber Valentine Forston is a Speech-Language Pathologist who graduated from the University of Kentucky with her MS in Communication Disorders. She is a Board Certified Specialist in Swallowing and Swallowing Disorders and an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant. She recently received her credentials to become a Certified Neonatal Therapist (CNT). She worked for Baptist Health Systems, Inc for 8

years before moving to Florida where she worked for Wolfson's Children's Hospital and Mayo Florida. She is now back in Kentucky working for Baptist Health Lexington. She has experience in adults and pediatrics with feeding and swallowing difficulties including: bedside swallow evaluations, Modified Barium Swallow studies, FEES, and pediatric feeding evaluations including NICU.