Presentations

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Rates of Physical Abuse Screening and Detection in Infants with Brief Resolved Unexplained Events (BRUEs)

Angela Doswell
Children's Mercy Hospital

James Anderst
Children's Mercy Hospital

Joel Tieder

Henry T. Puls
Children's Mercy Hospital

BRUE Research and Quality Improvement Network

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Angela Doswell, MD, MSPH

James Anderst, MD, MSCI

Joel Tieder, MD

Hank Puls, MD

BRUE Research and Quality Improvement Network

Disclosures

- None

Background

Background

- Apparent Life-Threatening Events (ALTEs) are associated with child physical abuse (CPA) at a rate of 0.4 to 3.7%.

- In 2016, the term Brief Resolved Unexplained Event (BRUE) replaced ALTE.

- It is unknown if there is a similar association between BRUEs and CPA.

Objectives

Primary:
- To determine the rate of CPA identified in infants presenting with a BRUE until 1 year of age.
- To examine differences between infants with and without CPA.

Secondary:
- To examine rates of diagnostic testing used to detect CPA at initial BRUE presentation.

Methods

Study Design

- The study was a secondary analysis of BRUE Research and Quality Improvement Network.

- Infants were followed until 1 year of age for BRUE recurrence or revisits to the same health system.

- Charts were reviewed for a CPA diagnosis made at or after the initial BRUE presentation.

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Study Population

Inclusion Criteria

- Infants with an *International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision* (ICD-10) code associated with a BRUE

Exclusion Criteria

- Abnormal physical examination (i.e., evidence of major trauma such as skeletal deformities)

- Preexisting comorbid condition (possible cause for BRUE)

- Objective symptoms precluding BRUE diagnosis (i.e., fever)

- Outside facility transfer

- Unrelated chief complaint

- No BRUE characteristics

Study Definitions

Child physical abuse (CPA)

- Abusive head trauma (AHT)
- Abusive cutaneous injury
- Abusive fractures

Diagnostic testing used to detect physical abuse

- Skeletal survey
- Neuroimaging (head CT and/or brain MRI)

Study Definitions

Physical examination findings concerning for trauma:
- Bruising in infants younger than 6 months of age (or nonmobile)
- Unexplained bruising in infants older than 6 months of age (or mobile)
- Any torn frenulum
- Soft tissue swelling of the scalp
- Rib or other bony tenderness to palpation

Concerning social history
- Maternal substance use
- Inconsistent injury history
- Child Protective Services involvement

Data Analysis

- Descriptive statistics
- Chi-square tests

Results

Results

- There was a total of 2036 infants included in the study.

- Only 7 infants (0.3%) were diagnosed with CPA within the first year of life.

- Only 1 infant (<0.1%) was diagnosed at the initial BRUE presentation.
  - This is lower than the rate of 0.4% to 3.7% of infants with CPA diagnosed at initial ALTE presentation.

Demographics

	Overall (N=2036)	BRUE without CPA diagnosis (N=2029)	BRUE with CPA diagnosis (N=7)	p-value
Age (days), Median [IQR]	46 [18, 103]	46 [18, 102]	106 [47, 169]	0.20
Male, N (%)	971 (47.7)	967 (47.7)	4 (57.1)	0.62
Race/Ethnicity, N (%)				
White	987 (48.5)	981 (48.3)	6 (85.7)	0.048
Black or African American	688 (33.8)	687 (33.9)	1 (14.3)	0.27
Other or Unknown	340 (16.7)	340 (16.8)	0 (0.0)	0.23
Asian	46 (2.3)	46 (2.3)	0 (0.0)	0.69
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	6 (0.3)	6 (0.3)	0 (0.0)	0.88
American Indian or Alaska Native	4 (0.2)	4 (0.2)	0 (0.0)	0.91
Hispanic, N (%)	446 (21.9)	444 (21.9)	2 (28.6)	0.88
Payer type, N (%)				0.41
Government	1306 (64.1)	1303 (64.2)	3 (42.9)	
Private	685 (33.6)	681 (33.6)	4 (57.1)	
Other	45 (2.2)	45 (2.2)	0 (0.0)	
Primary language English, N (%)	1708 (83.8)	1701 (83.8)	7 (100)	0.53

	Overall (N=2036)	BRUE without CPA diagnosis (N=2029)	BRUE with CPA diagnosis (N=7)	p-value
BRUE characteristics, N (%)				
Absent, decreased or irregular breathing	1477 (72.5)	1473 (72.6)	4 (57.1)	0.36
Color change	1043 (51.2)	1036 (51.1)	7 (100)	0.01
Event duration < 1 minute	1003 (49.3)	1001 (49.3)	2 (28.6)	0.27
Change in tone	860 (42.2)	856 (42.2)	4 (57.1)	0.42
Altered responsiveness	687 (33.7)	685 (33.8)	2 (28.6)	0.77
Clinical features, N (%)				
Physical examination findings concerning for trauma	7 (0.3)	6 (0.3)	1 (14.3)	<0.001

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	Overall (N=2036)	BRUE without CPA diagnosis (N=2029)	BRUE with CPA diagnosis (N=7)	p-value
BRUE Risk Factors, N (%)				
Age < 60 days	1187 (58.3)	1185 (58.4)	2 (28.6)	0.11
Event duration > 1 minute	1033 (50.7)	1028 (50.7)	5 (71.4)	0.27
Recurrent event (prior episode)	717 (35.2)	715 (35.2)	2 (28.6)	0.58
Multiple or cluster of events in last 24 hours	583 (28.6)	580 (28.6)	3 (42.9)	0.51
Gestational age < 38 weeks	541 (26.6)	539 (26.6)	2 (28.6)	0.72
Prematurity and corrected gestational age ≤ 45 weeks	394 (21.2)	393 (21.2)	1 (14.3)	0.66
Family history of sudden or unexplained death	176 (8.6)	176 (8.7)	0 (0.0)	0.07
Cardiopulmonary resuscitation performed	115 (5.6)	114 (5.6)	1 (14.3)	0.32
Social history concerning for non-accidental trauma or child abuse	79 (3.9)	79 (3.9)	0 (0.0)	0.31

Infants with CPA Diagnoses

Demographics	Duration since initial BRUE presentation	Pertinent Findings	Diagnoses
3-month-old healthy female	0 days	Petechiae on face, scalp, under chin, upper chest, knee Bruising to lateral face and lower back Patterned bruising to right thigh	Abusive cutaneous injury
1.5-month-old healthy male	3 or fewer days	Bilateral subdural hemorrhages Subgaleal hematoma or calavarial bone cyst of posterior parietal bone Bilateral retinal hemorrhages	AHT
6-month-old male with prematurity	31-60 days	Bruising Subdural hemorrhage	AHT Abusive cutaneous injury
3-day-old healthy male	31-60 days	Posterior parietal scalp hematoma Acute left femur fracture 7 healing right posterior rib fractures Healing right clavicle fracture Possible CML of left proximal tibia	Abusive fractures
2.5-month-old male with prematurity	61-90 days	Subdural hemorrhage Preretinal hemorrhages	AHT
3-month-old healthy female	61-90 days	Acute-on-chronic subdural hemorrhages	AHT
5-month-old healthy female	More than 90 days	Bruising Right frontal subdural hemorrhage	AHT Abusive cutaneous injury

Diagnostic Testing Used to Detect CPA

- Of all infants seen at initial BRUE presentation, only 7.0% underwent skeletal survey and 6.2% underwent head imaging.

- Skeletal survey was more likely to be performed for:
  - Physical examination findings concerning for trauma
    (42.9% vs. 6.9%, p<0.001)
  - Concerning social history
    (13.9% vs. 5.9%, p <0.05)

Diagnostic Testing Used to Detect CPA

- Head imaging was more often performed for:
  - Physical examination findings concerning for trauma
    - (71.4% vs. 6.0%; p< 0.001)
  - Family history of sudden unexplained death
    - (10.2% vs. 6.3%; p= 0.047)
  - Concerning social history
    - (22.8% vs. 5.4%; p< 0.001)

Limitations and Conclusion

Limitations

- Given the retrospective nature of this study, there was:
  - Low power due to pre-determined number of infants with CPA diagnosis
  - Lack of universal diagnostic testing to detect CPA
  - Potential differences in screening and documenting of physical examination findings

- Infants may have been diagnosed with CPA outside of their original health system.

Conclusions

- The rate of CPA in infants with BRUE is much lower than in ALTE.

- Diagnostic testing rates were also low in accordance with current clinical guidelines for BRUE.

- Protocol development and standardization of workup for sentinel injuries and occult physical abuse in infants with BRUE are warranted.

Questions?

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