

Advances in Neonatal Care: Abstract

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“On my honor, I pledge that I have neither given nor received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment.”- Amita Desai

Background: Proper assessment of pain is essential to allow for safe and compassionate care of infants in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). The quality and accuracy of the Neonatal Infant Pain Scale (NIPS) tool in the Johns Hopkins NICU has been debated since the NIPS tool has not been validated to assess chronic neonatal pain.

Purpose: The purpose of this project was to improve acute and chronic pain assessments for neonates in the Johns Hopkins NICU through implementation of the Neonatal Pain Agitation and Sedation Scale (N-PASS).

Methods/Search Strategy: An evidence search for a comprehensive tool to assess neonatal pain in the setting of a 45 bed, level IV NICU was completed. The N-PASS tool was found to be inclusive of assessing both chronic and acute neonatal pain. Participants, including NICU nurses and providers, were educated on the N-PASS tool. Nurses documented in N-PASS and NIPS tools during routine pain assessments for NICU infants for comparison. Participants engaged in a survey assessing knowledge of the N-PASS tool.

Findings/Results: The N-PASS tool generated X% of pain scores greater than the NIPS tool. Surveys demonstrated increase of staff knowledge for the N-PASS tool.

Implications for Practice: Implementation of a multidimensional pain tool that assesses acute and chronic pain is essential for proper pain assessment. Providers can manage neonatal pain when accurate documentation is evident.

Implications for Research: Further research evaluating guided management of acute and chronic pain scores on the N-PASS tool would aid hospital policies on therapies for neonatal pain.