NEUROLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF NEWBORNS AT TERM IN SALVADOR (ABSTRACT)*. **THESIS. SALVADOR, 2003.**

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In Brazil, few research on neurodevelopment of the newborn (NB) had been carried through; moreover, the existing studies present reduced casuistry.

Objective: The lack of data lead us to initiating a research line about NB neurologic development, with the objective to describe the profile of the neurological examination of just-been born normal and term.

Method: The study was carried through the transversal cut type in normal and term babies, at the Maternity of the Hospital Roberto Santos, Salvador, Bahia, in the period of September 2002 to March 2003.

Results: 400 babies, 204 (51%) males and 184 (46%) female had been evaluated. In 12 cases (3%) the data on the sort had been lost. Head circumference (HC) varied between 31.0 and 38.0 cm. Biauricular distance (BAD) varied between 16.0 and 22.0 cm. Anteroposterior distance (APD) varied between 18.0 and 25.0 cm. Fontanel size varied between 2.0 and 5.0 cm. Cephalic index (CI = BAD/APD) varied between 0.75 and 1.06. Direct correlation was verified between the measures of cephalic perimeter and anterior fontanel. However, this correlation was considered weak (rs = 0.0214), being this data statistically significant ($p<0.001$). Twenty-one NB (5.2%) presented spontaneous attitude of asymmetrical tonicocervical reflex (ATCR), 60 (15%) asymmetrical position without ATCR, and 317 (79.5%) symmetrical attitude. The spontaneous movement was characterized as corporal rectification in 390 (97.4%), cervical hyperextension in 9 (2.3%). In the test of traction, backwards fall of the head occurred in 235 (58.7%) and partial rectification in 164 (41.0%). The presence of involuntary movements type tremor was observed in 88 (22%). The gaze fixation of the look was present in 398 (99.5%) and absent in 2 (0.5%) of the cases. Photomotor reflexes were present in 100%. Primitive reflexes related the survival, as Moro reflex, suction, voracity, palmar and plantar grasping were present in 100%.

Conclusion: The study shows data of a city located in Northeastern region and the importance of the accomplishment of multicentric studies with the objective of better defining the anthropometric and neurological profiles of the Brazilian neonates considering regional differences.

KEY WORDS: newborn, child development, reflex, anthropometric measures.

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