Tied Again: Recurrent ankyloglossia and impact on breastfeeding

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BACKGROUND:
- Ankyloglossia is a common condition with a significant impact on breastfeeding.
- Frenulotomy has proven benefit.
- There is very little data in the literature on risk of recurrence.
- A 4% recurrence rate has previously been reported.

AIMS:
- We evaluated recurrence of ankyloglossia following frenulotomy and its impact on breastfeeding.

METHOD:
- A single centre, single surgeon, prospective study between May 2013 and October 2015.
- Data were collected from breast-feeding dyads with recurrence by:
  - Questionnaire on initial attendance
  - Telephone/postal follow up at 6 weeks.
- Questionnaire included:
  - Impact on breastfeeding
  - Symptoms, ease and comfort of breastfeeding
  - Use of supplementation.
- Examination included:
  - Severity of ankyloglossia (mild, moderate and severe)
  - Tongue mobility (protrusion, lateralisation and elevation)
- Our protocol involves:
  - Teaching all parents active wound management techniques.
  - Advice to have wound and breastfeeding review within a week.
- Data presented as means, analysed using Fisher’s Exact Test, with Freeman-Halton extension where indicated. Wilcoxon Rank-Sum test used to analyse independent variables.

RESULTS:

- 1937 Dyads
- 83 Recurrences (4.28%)
- 45 From other institutions (2.2%)
- 38 from our Institution (2.0%)

Fig 1. Recurrent tongue-tie
Fig 2. Scar division

Fig 3. Summary of recurrent ankyloglossia population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pain</th>
<th>Trauma</th>
<th>Poor Latch</th>
<th>Noisy Feeding</th>
<th>Head Bobbing</th>
<th>Unsatisfied Baby</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial</td>
<td>48 (58%)</td>
<td>34 (41%)</td>
<td>46 (55%)</td>
<td>28 (34%)</td>
<td>26 (31%)</td>
<td>6 (7%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recurrence</td>
<td>59 (71%)</td>
<td>35 (42%)</td>
<td>63 (76%)</td>
<td>40 (48%)</td>
<td>27 (33%)</td>
<td>4 (5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| p value (Fisher’s Exact) | 0.536 | 1 | 0.009 | 0.082 | 1 | 0.746 |

CONCLUSION:
- Our institution reports a recurrence rate of 2% after tongue-tie division.
- Recurrence can have significant impact on breastfeeding.
- Parents should be fully informed of the risks and sequelae of recurrent ankyloglossia.
- Babies who have undergone frenulotomy should be carefully followed up.
- Earlier recognition of recurrence would allow for more prompt treatment.
- Further investigation into the impact of revision frenulotomy on breastfeeding is required.

REFERENCES: