

Brazilian Oral Research

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Abstract

[GRAVINA, Danuze Batista Lamas](#) et al. Prevalence of dental caries in children born prematurely or at full term. *Braz. oral res.* [online]. 2006, vol.20, n.4, pp. 353-357. ISSN 1806-8324. doi: 10.1590/S1806-83242006000400013.

The objective of this study was to evaluate the prevalence of dental caries in 192 children, 96 born prematurely and 96 at full term, in a regional hospital in Brazil. Mean age at clinical examination was 40.72 months in the full-term group (G1) and 30.44 months in the premature group (G2). The children were divided in two age subgroups: 0 to 3 and 4 to 6 years. Statistical results (Student's *t* and Kruskal-Wallis tests) showed that dmft was 0.43 for G1 and 0.01 for G2 in the 0-3 age subgroup, and 1.7 for G1 and 1.1 for G2 in the 4-6 age subgroup. Differences were significant between G1 and G2 only in the 0-3 age subgroup ($p = 0.047$). Caries evaluation showed that, of the 96 children in G1, 75 were caries free, while in G2, 84 did not have the disease. These differences were not significant ($p = 0.088$). The lower mean dmft found in the 0-3 age subgroup in G2 may be attributed to routines established by the hospital's neonatology staff, such as frequent dental visits and preventive instructions about oral habits, oral hygiene and diet. After this age, with the completion of the primary dentition, values increased and became similar between the G1 and G2 groups. Results also suggested a highly skewed distribution since most caries were found in only a small number of children.

Keywords : Dental caries; Prevalence; Dentition; primary.

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