Evaluation and Treatment of Vestibular Related Impairments in Children

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Session Summary

• The goal of this evidence-based session is to help pediatric audiologists and speech and language pathologists quickly screen children for potential vestibular-related impairments who might benefit from interventions to improve balance and gaze stability.
Session Abstract

- Children and adolescents experience peripheral and central vestibular dysfunction, leading to impairments of gaze stability with head movement and delays in postural control and motor skills. Children may also experience dizziness and/or motion sensitivity. As the reported incidence of vestibular-related deficits in children grows, it is important that clinicians have the tools to identify and treat impairments in children. Without therapy, impairments persist and progress, adversely affecting high-level gross motor function, reading ability and school performance.

- Recent studies have provided methodology, normative data and cut-off scores for clinical tests of vestibulo-ocular reflex and balance function for children. Studies have also been completed to provide evidence of the effectiveness of vestibular rehabilitation for children with vestibular hypofunction and adolescents with concussion.

- The purpose of this session is to provide an update of the evidence related to vestibular dysfunction and related impairments in children and adolescents.

Objectives

1. Appreciate common diagnoses associated with peripheral and central vestibular-related impairments in children.

2. Consider important factors related to the clinical exam for children with potential vestibular dysfunction.

3. Discuss the evidence supporting interventions to improve gaze instability and balance for children with vestibular-related impairments.
Session Notes

- Please email Jennifer Christy at jbraswel@uab.edu if you would like a pdf of the session handout with references.