

PREMATURE BABY DEVELOPMENT: WHAT ARE THE DETERMINING FACTORS?

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The premature arrival of the baby in the world is a situation that can threaten its further development. This article raises the problem of development of premature babies and proposes to look for the determining factors which act on this one.

We performed 265 assessments of premature babies aged 5 to 20 months of age using the Griffiths Developmental Test. On the other hand, we considered antenatal, perinatal and postnatal information related to the parameters of babies and to the care received by them. These informations were cross-tabulated with infant developmental test scores using the Pearson correlation coefficient.

A first striking result is that there is no significant correlation between gestational age and developmental test results in infants. Another striking result is that the weight of the baby at 40 weeks is significantly correlated with the development of each of the dimensions assessed by the Griffiths test; motor skills ($r=0,268$; $p<0,01$), sociability/autonomy ($r=0,212$; $p<0,01$), hearing/language ($r=0,261$; $p<0,01$), oculomotor coordination ($r=0.233$; $p<0.01$) and execution ($r=0.251$; $p<0.01$).

These results highlight the fact that the period before 40 weeks is a critical moment for the further development of premature babies. The care that the baby receives during this period must therefore promote good weight growth to ensure good development to him. And the compliance to the kangaroo mother care has showed his efficiency in this regard.