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### Efficacy of oral dexamethasone in outpatients with acute bronchiolitis.

Schuh S, Coates AL, Binnie R, Allin T, Goia C, Corey M, Dick PT.

**Objective:** To examine the efficacy of oral dexamethasone in acute bronchiolitis. **Study design:** A double-blind randomized, placebo-controlled trial involving 70 children < 24 months old in the emergency department with Respiratory Disease Assessment Instrument > or = 6. Each patient received either 1 dose of 1 mg/kg of oral dexamethasone or placebo and was assessed hourly for a 4-hour period. Repeated measures regression analysis evaluated a change in the Respiratory Assessment Change Score (RACS).

**Results:** The 2 groups had similar baseline characteristics with Respiratory Disease Assessment Inventory of 9.4 +/- 2.3 in the dexamethasone group (n = 36) and 10.0 +/- 2.7 in the placebo group (n = 34). The RACS was -5.0 +/- 3.1 in the dexamethasone group and -3.2 +/- 3.7 in the placebo group (P = .029). Poor RACS occurred in 41% and 17% of the placebo and dexamethasone groups, respectively (P = .034). Of the children treated with dexamethasone, 19% were hospitalized compared with 44% in the placebo group (P = .039). There was no difference in RACS between the groups on day 7 (P = .75).

**Conclusion:** Outpatients with moderate-to-severe acute bronchiolitis derive significant clinical and hospitalization benefit from oral dexamethasone treatment in the initial 4 hours of therapy.

J Pediatr 2002; 140(1): 27-32

### Commentaire

Alors que les bronchiolites du nourrissons représentent des affections très fréquentes, à morbidité importante, leur traitement reste essentiellement symptomatique d'efficacité modérée. De nombreuses études contrôlées n'ont montré qu'un bénéfice mineur avec l'emploi de bêta-mimétiques ou d'adrénaline, et les études avec corticoïdes par voie générale ou inhalés n'ont jusqu'ici pas permis de conclure à une efficacité de ce traitement si l'on excluait les enfants asthmatiques. Cette étude semble toutefois démontrer un effet préventif d'un traitement précoce de dexaméthasone, qui a permis chez un petit groupe de patients sélectionnés d'éviter une hospitalisation. Une confirmation par d'autres études est certainement nécessaire avant d'adopter ce type de traitement. rt

### Physical exercise, sports, and lung function in smoking versus nonsmoking adolescents.

Holmen TL, Barrett-Connor E, Clausen J, Holmen J, Bjermer L.

Associations between adolescent smoking habits and exercise, particularly participation in sports and lung function were studied. All students aged 13-19 yrs in Nord-Trøndelag County, Norway, 1995-1997, were invited to join a cross-sectional study. Information on smoking habits and exercise was obtained by self-administered

questionnaire. Spirometry was performed in accordance with American Thoracic Society standards. Of the 6,811 students (aged 13-18 yrs, without asthma), 2,993 (44%) reported never-smoking, and 1,342 (20%) reported current smoking (90% daily). Frequency of physical exercise was inversely associated with smoking, but participants in individual sports with lesser endurance, especially body-building and fighting sports, were more likely to be daily smokers than nonparticipants. Both daily (53%) and occasional smokers (43%) were more likely to have quit sports than never-smokers (26%). Never-smokers showed a positive dose-response between physical exercise and lung function (forced vital capacity and forced expiratory volume in one second, adjusted for age and height). No similar significant association was observed in daily smokers. These data suggest that smoking habits in different sports should be considered when promoting physical activity as smoking prevention, and sports organizations should include smoking prevention programmes. Adolescents with better lung function may self-select into sports; this possibility needs to be studied in a longitudinal design.

Eur Respir J 2002; 19(1): 8-15.

### Commentaire

L'encouragement au sport présente un intérêt non seulement pour la prévention de l'obésité et des maladies cardio-vasculaires, mais également pour la prévention du tabagisme à l'adolescence. rt