

PROMOTION OF EARLY ORAL FEEDING SKILLS IN CHILDREN WITH INTESTINAL FAILURE: A RETROSPECTIVE OBSERVATIONAL STUDY

Background

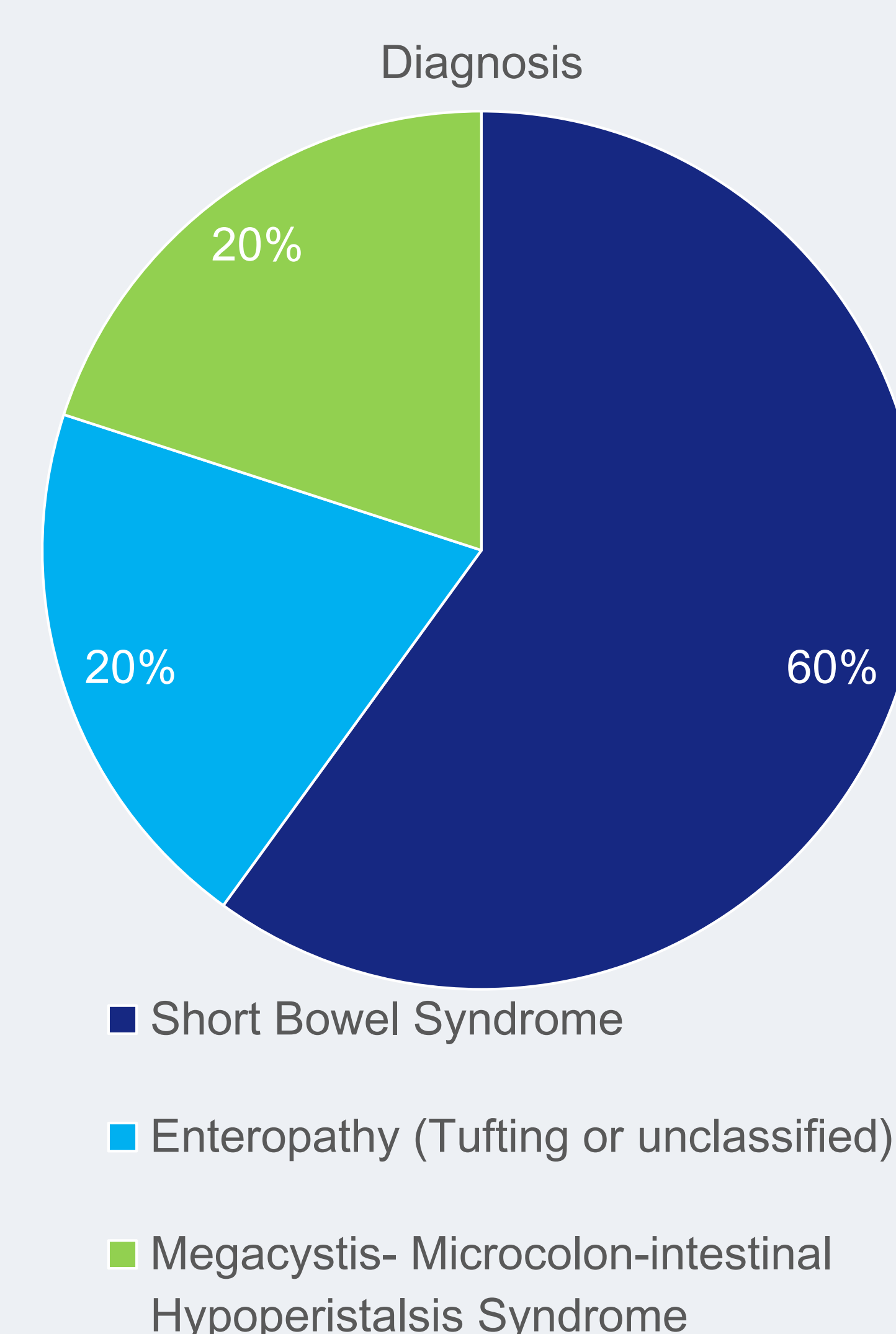
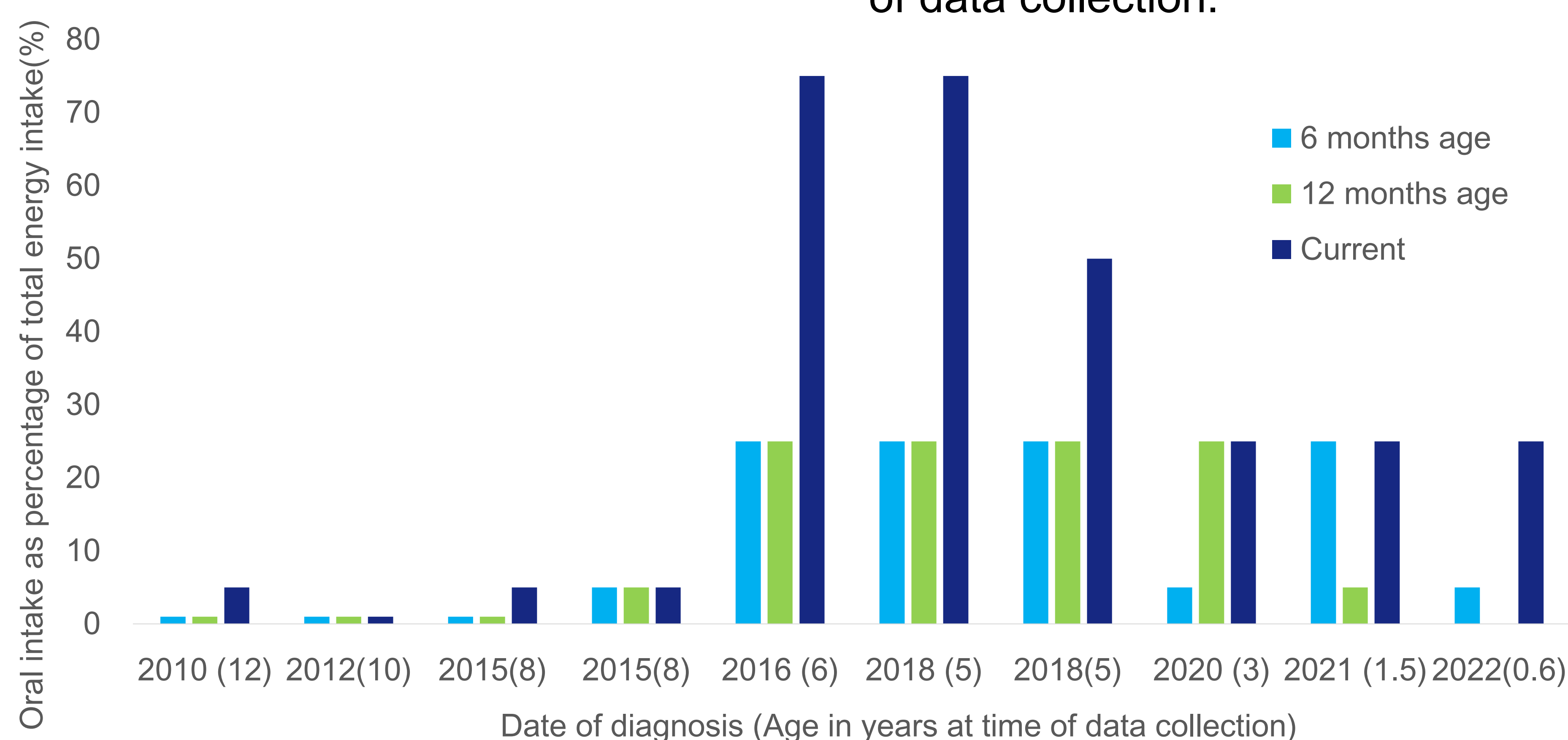
Emphasis on promotion of early oral feeding skills in children with intestinal failure (IF) is becoming an important component of nutritional management (1). The potential risk factors for feeding difficulties in the IF population are becoming more recognized (2). The aim of this study was to describe oral feeding in children with IF, and outcomes following increased promotion of oral feeding skills in early life.

Methods

- Retrospective observational study of children managed with IF between January 2010 and June 2023 in a tertiary centre.
- Children who were not reliant on parenteral nutrition in their first 12 months of life were excluded.
- Data was analysed using Excel and presented using descriptive statistics.

Results

- N=10, median age 5.5 years
- To date, four children (Short Bowel Syndrome (SBS) n=3; Enteropathy n=1) obtain less than 5% of energy from oral diet. Amongst those, three children (SBS n=2; Enteropathy n=1) had no oral intake at six and 12 months.
- Children with a diagnosis in more recent years had oral feeds introduced earlier, was associated with increased oral intake at time of data collection.



Conclusion

This small cohort study suggests that a change in practice to earlier oral feeding in children with IF is associated with improved oral intake later in life. Further research with large numbers is required to assess the impact of underlying diagnosis as well as comorbidity.

References

1. Olieman, J. & Kastelijin W. Nutritional Feeding Strategies in Pediatric Intestinal Failure. *Nutrients*. 2020 Jan; 12(1): 177.
2. Bactor, D.A. et al. The prevalence of feeding difficulties and potential risk factors in pediatric intestinal failure: Time to consider promoting oral feeds? *Clinical Nutrition*. 2021 Oct 40(10): 5399-5406

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