

Factors Affecting Exercise Adherence among Children Diagnosed with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD) in Lady Ridgeway Hospital, Sri Lanka: A Descriptive Cross-sectional Study

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Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD) is a genetic disorder characterized by progressive muscle weakness which is typically diagnosed in early childhood. Exercise has significant benefits for children with DMD, however, adherence to exercise programs can be challenging, and identifying the factors affecting adherence can be beneficial as these are measures that can be taken to overcome them. The objective of this study was to describe the factors affecting exercise adherence among the children with DMD in Lady Ridgeway Hospital (LRH), Sri Lanka. A qualitative cross-sectional study was carried out among parents/guardians of children diagnosed with DMD in LRH, Borella. Three focus group discussions (FGD) were conducted among 24 parents/guardians of the children who are diagnosed with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy until the saturation point was reached. Parents/guardians were divided into focus groups consisting 7 to 10 participants. Data from the FGD were transcribed into verbatim. An inductive thematic approach was used to analyse the data from the FGDs. Four themes were identified through the FGDs and they included parents'/guardians' perception on benefits and issues of exercise program, their perception on child support, their reasoning on less child support towards following the exercise program as well as suggestions and methods to improve the effectiveness of the exercise program. The study revealed that factors such as family support, parents' education, household income and transportation effect the exercise adherence of children diagnosed with DMD in Sri Lanka.

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