



OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL IN NEONATOLOGY (ATO-NEO): PROPOSED APPROACH TO THE NEWBORN IN NEONATAL UNITS

Luciana De Simoni Martinez, University of
Brasilia;
lucianamartinez.to.unb@gmail.com

Caroline Oliveira Alves, University of
Brasilia

Hellen Delchova Rabelo, Federal District
Health Department

Mchilanny Bussinguer de Menezes,
Federal District Health Department

Vanessa Gomes de Souza Corrêa,
University of Brasilia

Introduction

Neonatal Units, designed for high-risk newborns, are fundamentally aimed at promoting life. Occupational Therapy is a health science that adopts a systemic approach, integrating biopsychosocial and spiritual knowledge to support life. In the hospital setting, it extends beyond the health-disease process, focusing on occupational performance.

Objective

To develop and propose an Occupational Therapy Assessment Protocol for Neonates in Neonatal Units (NICU).

Methodology

This study involved a literature review followed by an exploratory research phase to develop an assessment tool.

A preliminary version of the tool was evaluated by an experienced occupational therapist specializing in neonatology, leading to modifications based on clinical expertise.

Results

A structured assessment tool was developed, comprising the following components:



Fig. 1: Occupational therapist assessing a newborn in the NICU

1. Preliminary Information
2. Global Assessment
3. Occupational Therapy Assessment



The components were subdivided into the following assessments:

- i. Feeding & breastfeeding assessment
- ii. Infant hygiene & caregiving assessment (co-occupation)
- iii. Parent–infant attachment & interaction
- iv. Sensory–motor assessment
- v. Neurological assessment
- vi. Vision assessment hearing
- vii. Assessment muscle tone assessment
- viii. Congenital conditions & orthotic needs



Fig. 2: Printed and laminated protocol.

Conclusion

The Occupational Therapy Assessment for Neonates in Neonatal Units provides a foundation for professional practice, standardizes the approach to neonatal care, enhances interdisciplinary communication, facilitates the development of clinical indicators, and supports the structuring of interventions.

References

- Casimiro, T., & Linhares, C. (2021). Atuação do terapeuta ocupacional com pais de bebês em unidades neonatais brasileiras / Occupational therapist performance with parents of babies in brazilian neonatal units. *Revista Interinstitucional Brasileira de Terapia Ocupacional REVISBRATO*, 5(3), 333-351. <https://doi.org/10.47222/2526-3544.rbto41909>
- Cruz, D., Rodrigues, D., & Wertheimer, L. (2021). Reflexões sobre o uso de instrumentos de avaliação na Terapia Ocupacional no Brasil / Reflexions about the use of instruments of evaluation in Occupational Therapy in Brazil. *Revista Interinstitucional Brasileira de Terapia Ocupacional REVISBRATO*, 5(1), 2-7. <https://doi.org/10.47222/2526-3544.rbto35973>
- Dittz, E., & Rocha, L. (2018). Terapia Ocupacional em unidades de terapia intensiva neonatal *Terapia ocupacional em contextos hospitalares e cuidados paliativos*. In M.M.R.D.P. De Carlo & A.M. Kudo. *Terapia ocupacional em contextos hospitalares e cuidados paliativos*. (pp. 79-102). São Paulo: Editora Payá

