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Trunk Control and Gross Motor Outcomes after Body-Weight Supported Treadmill Training in Young Children with Severe Cerebral Palsy: A Case Series

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OUTCOMES

Children with cerebral palsy (CP) classified as Gross Motor Function Classification System (GMFCS) level V present with decreased gross motor function & trunk control that impacts their functional activities & participation in family activities. (Palisano et al. 2008)

Research indicates body-weight supported treadmill training (BWSTT) may improve motor control for children with neuromotor disabilities. (Damiano & DeJong 2009)

The toddler years present a window of opportunity for developmental changes. (Dodd & Foley 2007, Mattern-Baxter 2009)

The purpose of this case series was to explore the impact of a 6-week BWSTT intervention on postural control & gross motor function in 3 young children with CP in GMFCS levels IV-V.

The outcomes suggest that gross motor function & trunk control may improve through BWSTT in young children with severe CP. Future research is needed to determine if this type of intervention can produce greater results.

Parents of all 3 children noticed improvements & expressed the desire to continue the intervention.

None of the children were able to walk without assistance. All 3 children displayed spasticity in bilateral lower extremities.