

Prematurity and Postnatal Neurological Sequelae

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Introduction

Prematurity is a public health problem worldwide. Every year, 15 million infants are born premature, accounting for a prevalence of 11% in 84 surveyed countries^{1,2}. Premature births alone account for a quarter of all neonatal deaths³. These survivors of premature births have high rates of postnatal neurological morbidities^{4,5,6}.

Objective

The objective of this review study was to present the sequelae of prematurity in a consolidated manner.

Materials & Methods

A literature review was performed using the search terms 'preterm births and neurodevelopment outcomes', 'preterm babies and neurodevelopmental sequelae', 'preterm births and neurodevelopmental sequelae'. The papers matching such keywords and published from 2000 to 2022 were included for making a list. Among them original research works and review articles were selected for analysis.

Results

From the search results the primary sequelae were CP, Neurocognitive disability, Global Developmental Delay, ROP, Sensorineural Deafness, Epilepsy, ASD, ADHD and Neuropsychosis. The secondary causes which indirectly contributed to produce neurological consequences were severe anaemia, immunodeficiency, renal dysfunction, Persistent Primary Pulmonary Hypertension and Cardiovascular anomalies (Fig. 1).

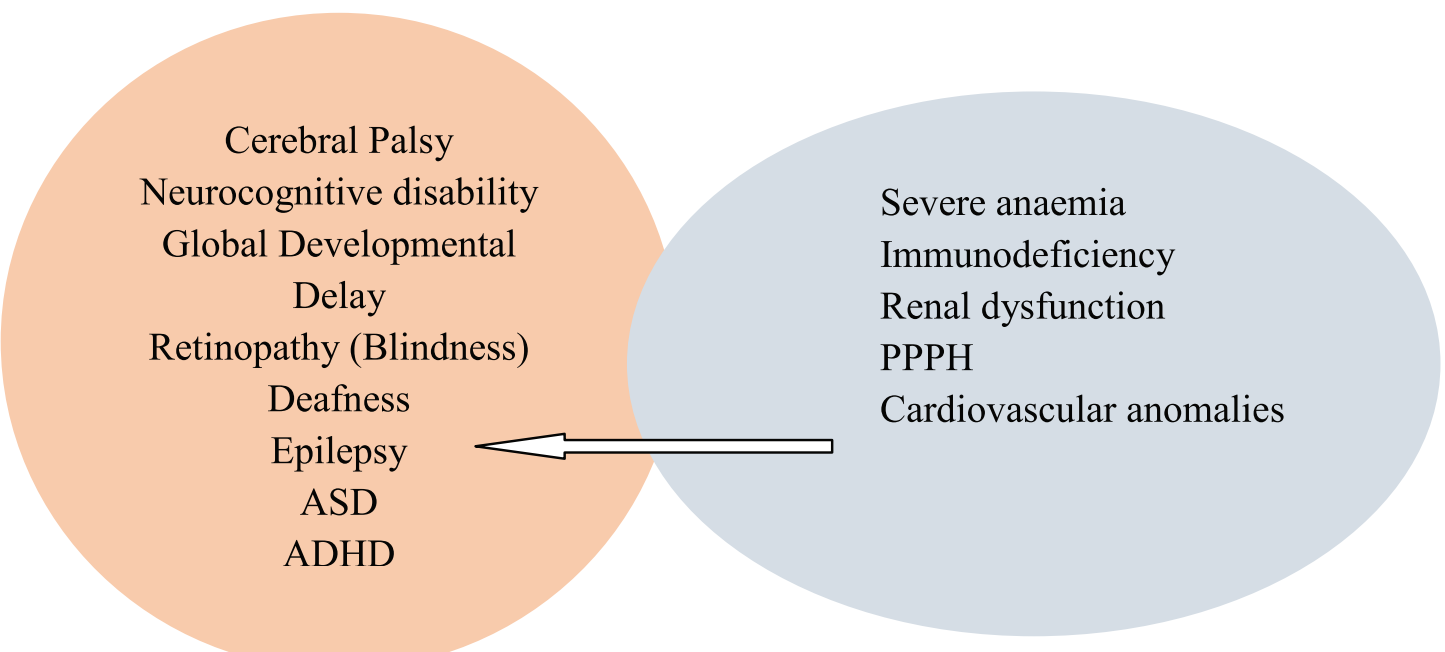


Fig.1: Sequelae of Preterm Deliver

Cerebral palsy (CP) ^{7,8,9}	
France study The overall rate of cerebral palsy at- 24-26 WGA 6.9% (4.7% to 9.6%) 27-31 WGA 4.3% (3.5% to 5.2%) 32-34 WGA 1.0% (0.5% to 1.9%)	Serbia study In cases of CP - 54% were preterm 30.3% late preterm 17.2% moderate preterm 6.9% extremely preterm

Fig 2: Preterm Delivery and CP

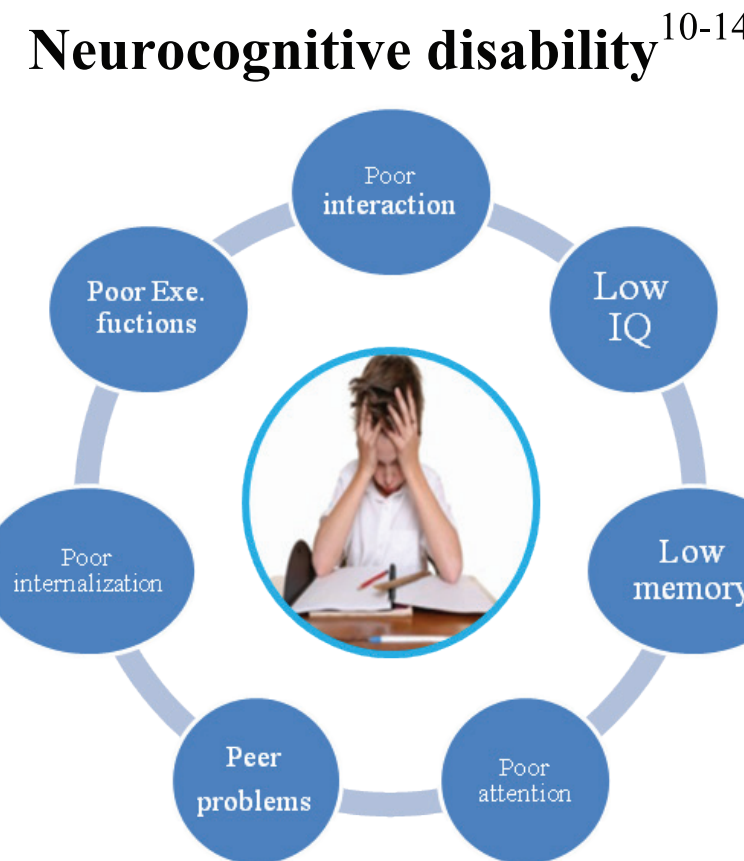


Fig 3: Children with neurocognitive disorder

Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) ¹⁵	
Meta analysis on 1550 babies - RR of ADHD was 2.64 in children born preterm	Population based study RR of ADHD 1.3 in GA 28-36 week RR of ADHD 5.0 in GA <28 week

Fig. 4: Risk of ADHD in preterm babies

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) ^{16, 17}	
Cohort study of ASD after adjusting OR 3.3	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Extremely preterm (22-27 weeks) 6.1%Very to moderate (28-33 weeks) 2.6%Left preterm (34-36 weeks) 1.9%Full term (39-41 weeks) 1.4%	



Fig. 5: Risk of ASD in preterm babies

Psychiatric disorders: Preterm birth has been identified as a significant risk factor for some specific psychiatric disorders in children such as emotional disorders, depression, ADHD and ASD^{18,19,20}.

Hearing loss²⁶⁻²⁸

Poland study
11.0% born <25 WGA
5.0% born at 26-27 WGA
3.46% born at 27-28 WGA
2.0-3.0% born at 29-30 WGA

Fig.7: Prematurity and sensorineural deafness

Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP) ²¹⁻²⁵

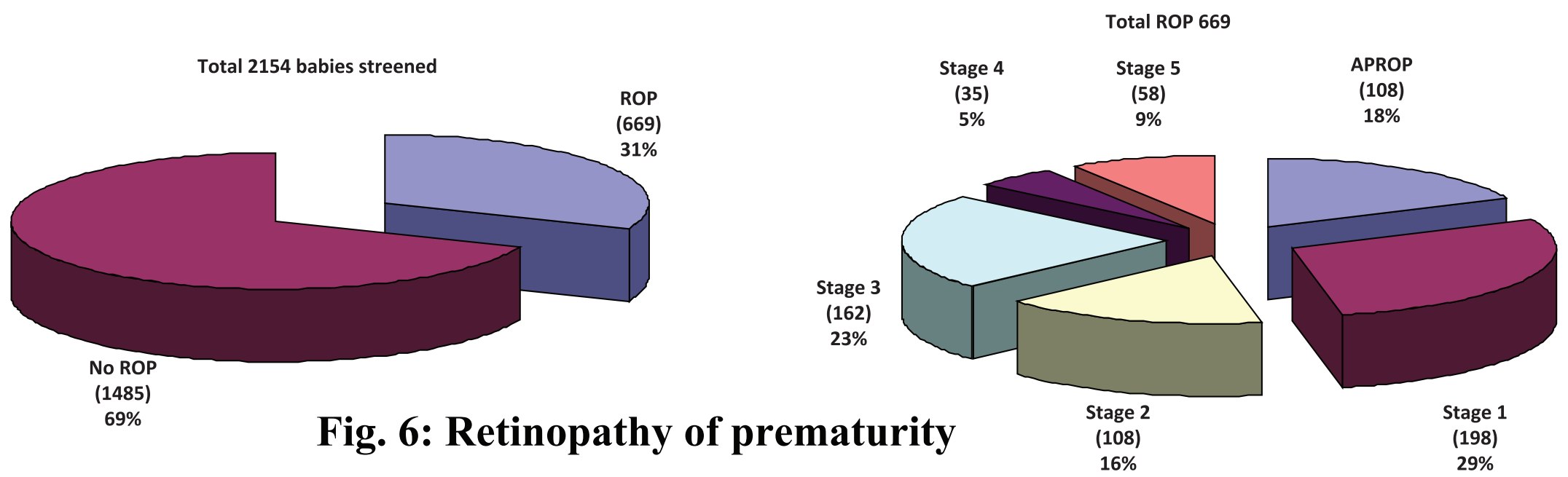


Fig. 6: Retinopathy of prematurity

Epilepsy²⁹⁻³³

GA 23-31 weeks OR 4.98 GA 32-34 weeks OR 1.98 GA 35-36 weeks OR 1.76	Population registry studies- <ul style="list-style-type: none">•49% Intellectual disability•31% Severe CP•26% Behaviour disorder•35% Epilepsy•11% Blindness•04% Hearing loss
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Fig. 8: Prematurity and epilepsy

Conclusions

Conclusion: Survivors of preterm babies suffer from various types of morbidities in post natal life. Prevention of preterm birth through adequate antenatal care, safe delivery and immediate postnatal care can reduce these morbidities.

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