

Reambulation in boys with Duchenne muscular dystrophy by long leg orthoses

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Reambulation in boys with Duchenne muscular dystrophy (DMD) has been practiced in Denmark since 1993.

Studies have indicated that intervention with long leg orthoses on average prolongs ambulation about 24 months.

The aim of the study is to assess the effect of reambulation in 35 Danish boys with DMD during the period 1993-2000. Data have been recorded from the files of RehabiliteringsCenter for Muskelsvind, and from a questionnaire among the parents.

The study illustrates that the success of intervention with long leg orthoses depends on timing, selection, and motivation. The best result is obtained if the intervention is coordinated with the time for loss of ambulation and release of contractures in the legs.

Most families felt that daily activities such as getting dressed, toilet etc. became more difficult with long leg orthoses. Two thirds of the families considered that working with the orthoses was time consuming, but that it was OK. Given the opportunity, 50% of the families would choose intervention with long leg orthoses again, 50% would not.

Reambulation with long leg orthoses is not suitable for all Duchenne boys. Timing in relation to time of loss of ambulation is essential. If timely intervention is not possible, it is better not to reambulate.

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