

Abstract

Purpose: This study was undertaken to explore the beliefs and practices regarding assessment and management of tongue-tie of oral and maxillofacial surgeons, otolaryngologists, dentists, lactation consultants and speech-language pathologists in the State of Vermont.

Methods: One hundred and six individuals in five different professions were mailed a survey addressing the topic of interest. Multiple choice and forced choice questions targeted themes that included referral patterns, assessment methods, indications for surgical intervention, and outcomes from surgical intervention.

Results: About 59% ($n = 63$) of those contacted participated in the study and 68% of responses ($n = 43$) met inclusion criteria. Response rates ranged from 14 to 26% across professions. Surveyed professionals agreed that reduced tongue mobility is the most prominent indicator for surgery. Except for that area of agreement, there was great variation in opinion amongst professionals regarding appropriate timing of surgical intervention, best practice for surgical release of tongue-tie, and the definition of a successful outcome.

Conclusions: Assessment and management practices of ankyloglossia remain controversial both within and among professional groups. Until future research establishes universal assessment and management practices for ankyloglossia, all professionals involved should thoroughly assess each case and determine the need for surgical intervention on an individual basis.

References

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