

3 years of experience with intensive occupational and physiotherapy treatment on an ambulant basis for children with cerebral palsy. What are the crucial factors for success?

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OBJECTIVE: At the C.D.N. since 2009, ambulant treatment was administered in blocks of 2 weeks with daily intensive occupational- and physiotherapy, thereby gaining experience of which factors are finally decisive for a successful therapy.

METHODS: 14 children with CP (aged 5-13 years, 5 girls, 9 boys, GMFM and MACS 1-2) participated between 2009 and 2011 in 27 ambulant intensive therapy sessions. Daily therapy frequency ranged from 1 hour up to 4 hours. In a group of 4 patients, group activities were additionally carried out.

Normative assessments (ROM, MASS, COPM) and also specific assessments (AHA, gait analysis) were used before and after the therapy blocks. Based on a retrospective data analysis factors of success and failure were discovered.

RESULTS: 11 of 14 children achieved the patient-centered goals and obtained a better outcome in the assessment (GAS: 0).

The parents of 10 children were highly impressed with the success of the intensive therapy block (COPM improvement of satisfaction quality ≥ 3).

CONCLUSIONS: The decisive factors for the successful treatment were the selection of the therapy means (patient-centered, adjusted to the child's cognition), additional motivation through the group activities and the compliance of the parents ("soft factors"). The selection of the method of treatment ("hard factor") seemed to be less important.

At the C.D.N. in 2012 we will introduce a new standardized concept of 1-2 weeks intensive therapy blocks accompanied by a therapeutic, psychological and educational treatment.

Keywords: cerebral palsy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, intensive treatment, ambulatory treatment
