Applications and results using the Nordic Orofacial Test–Screening protocol.

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Aim: Orofacial function includes a multitude of actions, some of them vital, such as breathing, chewing and swallowing, and also acts as the basis for social interaction in terms of speech, emotional communication, facial expression and appearance. Impaired orofacial function is a common feature in many inherited disorders or may be acquired as a consequence of disease and trauma. The Nordic Orofacial Test–Screening (NOT-S) is a comprehensive method for screening of orofacial function developed by a Scandinavian network of dentists and speech and language pathologists. NOT-S comprises evaluation of twelve domains of orofacial function. They are assessed from a structured interview and a clinical examination with a picture manual illustrating the different tasks in the examination. A method study of 120 individuals with chronic disease or disability compared to 60 healthy controls showed good intra- and interexaminer agreement. The aim was to present current applications and results from publications on the use of NOT-S.

Material and Methods: Beside the method study published in 2007 to date four studies has been published. One was a study in individuals with Parkinson’s disease (n=15), two were studies in individuals with rare disorders; Ectodermal dysplasia (n=46), and Prader-Willi Syndrome (n=45), and one was a study evaluating surgical treatment in children with tonsillar hypertrophy (n=67). In order o visualize to what degree the domains of orofacial function are affected in different conditions, connected plots were made from the mean NOT-S scores for the twelve domains of NOT-S, here called dysfunction profiles.

Results: The groups with different diagnoses showed specific dysfunction profiles indicating patterns of domains with impaired orofacial function. The use of NOT-S to assess orofacial function before and after surgery in children with tonsillar hypertrophy showed that the method can also be used to evaluate interventions.

Conclusion: Screening with NOT-S proved to be a quick and reliable way of making a comprehensive assessment of orofacial function. NOT-S discriminated between groups with different diagnoses and also in evaluation of treatment. The results indicate that NOT-S has good reliability and discriminant validity.