Nutritional Care of Preterm Infants: Scientific Basis and Practical Guidelines
Nutritional Care of Preterm Infants

Scientific Basis and Practical Guidelines

Volume Editors

Berthold Koletzko  Munich
Brenda Poindexter  Indianapolis, Ind.
Ricardo Uauy  Santiago de Chile

35 figures, 10 in color and 37 tables, 2014
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List of Contributors

Laura D. Brown
Department of Pediatrics
Section of Neonatology
Perinatal Research Center
University of Colorado School of Medicine
13243 East 23rd Avenue
Aurora, CO 80045 (USA)

Femke de Groof
Department of Pediatrics
Medisch Centrum Alkmaar
Wilhelminalaan 12
NL–1815 JD Alkmaar (The Netherlands)

Scott C. Denne
Department of Pediatrics
University of Indiana School of Medicine
702 Barnhill Dr, Room 5900
Indianapolis, IN 46202 (USA)

Magnus Domellöf
Department of Clinical Sciences
Umea University
Pediatrics
SE–90185 Umea (Sweden)

Richard A. Ehrenkranz
Yale Pediatrics
Yale University School of Medicine
PO Box 208064
New Haven, CT 06520-8064 (USA)

Nicholas D. Embleton
Newcastle Neonatal Service
Ward 35 Royal Victoria Infirmary
Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4LP (UK)

Christoph Fusch
Department of Pediatrics
McMaster University & Hamilton Health Sciences
1280 Main Street west
Hamilton, Ont. L8S4K8 (Canada)

Michael K. Georgieff
Division of Neonatology
Department of Pediatrics
2450 Riverside Avenue
East Building MB-630
Minneapolis, MN 55454 (USA)

William W. Hay, Jr.
Department of Pediatrics
Section of Neonatology
Perinatal Research Center
University of Colorado School of Medicine
Anschutz Medical Campus F441
13243 East 23rd Avenue
Aurora, CO 80045 (USA)

Frank Jochum
Head of the Department of Pediatrics
Ev. Waldkrankenhaus Spandau
Stadtrandstr. 555
DE–13589 Berlin (Germany)

Gert Francois Kirsten
Head Neonatal Division
Tygerberg Children's Hospital and
University of Stellenbosch
PO Box 19063
Tygerberg
ZA–7505 Cape Town (South Africa)
Berthold Koletzko  
Division of Metabolic and Nutritional Medicine  
Dr. von Hauner Children’s Hospital  
University of Munich Medical Centre  
Lindwurmmstr. 4  
DE–80337 Munich (Germany)

Teresa Murguia-Peniche  
Foege Fellow at Rollins School of Public Health  
Hubert Department of Global Health  
Emory University  
1518 Clifton Road NE  
Atlanta, GA 30322 (USA)

Zoe Lansdowne  
National Institute for Health Research  
Southampton Biomedical/Pharmacy Research Centre  
Mailpoint 40  
Southampton General Hospital  
Tremona Road  
Southampton SO16 6YD (UK)

Josef Neu  
Pediatrics/Neonatology  
University of Florida  
1600 SW Archer Road  
Gainesville, FL 32610 (USA)

Alexandre Lapillonne  
Department of Neonatology  
Necker-Enfants Malades Hospital  
149 rue de Sevres  
FR–75015 Paris (France)

Brenda Poindexter  
Indiana University School of Medicine  
Section of Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine  
Riley Hospital for Children at Indiana University Health  
699 Riley Hospital Dr. RR208  
Indianapolis, IN 46202 (USA)

Alison Leaf  
National Institute for Health Research  
Southampton Biomedical Research Centre  
University of Southampton  
Mailpoint 803  
Child Health, Level F, South Block  
Southampton General Hospital  
Tremona Road  
Southampton SO16 6YD (UK)

Sara E. Ramel  
Division of Neonatology  
University of Minnesota Amplatz Children’s Hospital  
University of Minnesota School of Medicine  
2450 Riverside Avenue  
East Building MB-630  
Minneapolis, MN 55454 (USA)

Ronit Lubetzky  
Department of Pediatrics  
Tel Aviv-Sourasky Medical Center  
6 Weizman Street  
IL–64239 Tel-Aviv (Israel)

Thibault Senterre  
University of Liège  
Department of Neonatology  
CHU de Liège  
CHR de la Citadelle  
Boulevard du XII de Ligne, 1  
B–4000 Liège (Belgium)

Dror Mandel  
Tel Aviv-Sourasky Medical Center  
6 Weizman Street  
IL–64239 Tel-Aviv (Israel)

Karen Simmer  
Centre for Neonatal Research and Education  
School of Paediatrics and Child Health  
University of Western Australia (M550)  
35 Stirling Highway  
Crawley, W.A. 6009 (Australia)

Francis B. Mimouni  
Department of Pediatrics  
Tel Aviv Medical Center  
6 Weizman Street  
IL–64239 Tel Aviv (Israel)

Hania Szajewska  
Department of Paediatrics  
The Medical University of Warsaw  
Dzialdowska 1  
PL–01-184 Warsaw (Poland)

Fernando Moya  
Director of Neonatology  
Betty Cameron Women and Children’s Hospital  
2131 S. 17th Street  
Wilmington, NC 28401 (USA)

Reginald C. Tsang  
3333 Burnet Ave  
Cincinnati, OH 45229 (USA)
Ricardo Uauy
Division of Neonatology Pontifical Catholic University
Medical School and Institute of Nutrition INTA
Universidad de Chile
Macul 5540
11 Santiago de Chile (Chile)

Chris H. van den Akker
Department of Pediatrics
Sophia Children’s Hospital
ErasmusMC
Postbus 2060
NL–3000 CB Rotterdam (The Netherlands)

Sophie R.D. van der Schoor
Department of Pediatrics
Onze Lieve Vrouwe Gasthuis
Oosterpark 9
NL–1091 AC Amsterdam (The Netherlands)

Johannes B. van Goudoever
Department of Pediatrics
Emma Children’s Hospital
AMC, c/o Room H7-282
P.O. Box 22660
NL–1100 DD Amsterdam (The Netherlands)

Hester Vlaardingerbroek
Department of Pediatrics
Emma Children’s Hospital
AMC, c/o Room H7-282
P.O. Box 22660
NL–1100 DD Amsterdam (The Netherlands)

Ekhard E. Ziegler
Department of Pediatrics
University of Iowa
2501 Crosspark Rd.
Coralville, IA 52241-8802 (USA)
Preface

Improved conditions of care for premature infants have led to markedly increased survival rates over the last few decades, particularly in infants with very low birth weight (<1,500 g) and extremely low birth weight (<1,000 g). Therefore, increased attention is now directed to improving long-term outcome, health and quality of life. Accumulating evidence demonstrates that nutritional care is a central cornerstone towards achieving this goal. Normal fetal growth in utero is extremely rapid, for example from 30 to 36 weeks of gestation fetal body weight doubles in only 6 weeks, along with remarkable tissue differentiation. It remains an enormous challenge to match this quantity and quality of growth and development in infants whose nutrient supply via the umbilical cord has been prematurely interrupted. Major progress has been achieved in our understanding of meeting their nutrient needs, but a surprising variability of neonatal nutritional support exists in clinical practice around the world, within countries, and even between different physicians working in one and the same neonatal unit. Current knowledge on nutrient requirements and the practice of nutritional care in premature infants is provided by this book, with a focus on very low birth weight infants. The most recent evidence and critical analyses were contributed by leading experts in the field from all five continents. The manuscripts have been shared among all authors and further reviewers who provided critical comments prior to a two-day authors’ meeting held in Munich, Germany, in July 2013. The authors presented their chapters which were critically discussed, and agreement on conclusions and recommendations was sought. The manuscripts were then thoroughly revised to comprise these considerations and to include latest knowledge as guidance for clinical application.

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Berthold Koletzko, Munich
Brenda Poindexter, Indianapolis, Ind.
Ricardo Uauy, Santiago de Chile

References
