Abstract

Background & aims: Home enteral nutrition is used increasingly in pediatric populations. Our objective was to describe the profile of pediatric patients requiring this treatment. Material and methods: All patients under 18 years old requiring treatment with home enteral nutrition between January 1995 and December 2004 were analyzed retrospectively. Results: 304 patients were studied (157 boys). The mean age at the start of treatment was 4.02 ± 4.09 years, median of 2.5 years; 28% of all patients were under 1 year. The main indications were oncological disease in 91 patients (29.9%) and digestive diseases in 84 (27.6%). There were significant differences depending on the clinical diagnosis for the start age, type of access, infusion regime and formula prescribed. Nutrients were delivered by nasogastric tube in 218 patients (71.7%). Overnight enteral nutrition was the preferred infusion regime in 155 patients (51%). Adult or pediatric polymeric formulas were mostly prescribed in 190 patients (62.5%). The mean treatment duration was 306 ± 544 days. Conclusion: In our series, enteral support usually begins at an early age. Its characteristics varied depending on patient pathology. Knowledge of the pediatric patient profile is important to design the most effective strategy for home enteral nutrition.

Keywords

Home enteral nutrition, Children, Enteral tube feeding, Gastrostomy, Jejunostomy.