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Autism Study Finds Significant Benefit with Hyperbaric Treatment



Madison, Wisconsin. Grace Kenitz (Autism and Mitochondrial disorder) receives treatment in an OxyHealth portable hyperbaric chamber. (PRNewsFoto/International Hyperbarics Association, Inc.)

MELBOURNE, FL UNITED STATES

MELBOURNE, Fla., March 25 /PRNewswire/ -- In a medical world that tells parents of autistic children to "accept" the condition of their child, a new study brings not only hope, but actual help, to these families. Lead physician and researcher, Daniel Rossignol, M.D., treats children with autism. Seeing his patients improve with hyperbaric oxygen treatment led him to conduct the first large scale, double-blind, controlled study to examine its effectiveness. And, the results of this study demonstrate positive improvements.

(Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20090325/LA88558>)

Hyperbaric therapy traditionally involves inhaling up to 100% oxygen at a pressure greater than 1 atmosphere (atm) in a pressurized chamber. In the first randomized, controlled, double-blind multicenter trial, published in BMC Pediatrics and entitled "Hyperbaric treatment for children with autism: a multicenter, randomized, double-blind, controlled trial." Dr. Rossignol and colleagues, from 6 centers in the USA, studied 62 children, aged 2-7 years, to assess the efficacy of hyperbaric treatment in children with autism.

The research trial concludes that children with autism who received hyperbaric treatment at 1.3 atmospheres and 24% oxygen for 40 hourly sessions had significant improvements in overall functioning, receptive language, social interaction, eye contact, and sensory/cognitive awareness compared to children who received slightly pressurized room air.

The children were randomly assigned to either 40 hours of hyperbaric treatment at 1.3 atm and 24% oxygen (treatment group) or slightly pressurized room air at 1.03 atm and 21% oxygen (non-treatment group). Clinical outcomes were evaluated by three different scales: the Clinical Global Impression (CGI) scale, the Aberrant Behavior Checklist (ABC), and the Autism Treatment Evaluation Checklist (ATEC).

Dr. Rossignol said, "In our study, we observed significant improvements

in several core autistic behaviors with the use of hyperbaric therapy at 1.3 atm compared to children receiving near-placebo treatment. These findings confirm what we are seeing in clinical practice--that many children with autism may benefit with the use of this treatment."

Director of the International Hyperbarics Association, Shannon Kenitz, said, "With autism on the rise, it is promising to see a study that has been conducted with the high standards endorsed by the medical community. Having this scientifically controlled and analyzed study that shows the positive effects of hyperbarics is truly what this community has needed. The study not only presents the benefit of Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy for children with autism, but also gives families the hope that so many other therapies have failed to do."

"The impact of this study on the autism community is significant. It brings validity to a successful intervention that needs to become part of mainstream medicine," commented Kyle Van Dyke, M.D., and Autism Specialist from Madison, Wisconsin.

According to Philip James, M.D., an expert in hyperbaric medicine out of the UK, this study is "An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field."

The growing concern regarding autism in this country is reinforced by the critically high ranking this study as earned by BMC Pediatrics. It is currently the most accessed article and projected to continue to climb in significance.

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Shannon Kenitz

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