

Multisensory interventions cut pain in preterm infant eye exams

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(HealthDay)—The addition of multisensory pain-reducing interventions

to topical anesthetic (TA) reduces pain in eye examinations of preterm infants, according to research published online June 1 in *Pediatrics*.

Timothy Disher, Ph.D., from Dalhousie University in Halifax, Canada, and colleagues conducted a systematic literature review to identify randomized trials of pain-relieving interventions for retinopathy of prematurity examinations.

Based upon 29 included studies, the researchers found that TA combined with sweet taste and an adjunct intervention (e.g., non-nutritive sucking) had the highest probability of being the optimal treatment (surface under the cumulative ranking curve, 0.86). There was sparse reporting of secondary outcomes in only two to four studies; however, they did support sweet-tasting solutions with or without adjunct interventions as optimal.

"Despite limitations, there are consistent trends suggesting that the addition of multisensory pain-reducing interventions with TA results in an improved reduction in pain response to eye examinations in preterm [infants](#)," the authors write. "Given the less than optimal efficacy of current treatments, it is imperative that future researchers investigate novel approaches to reduce [pain](#) associated with [eye examinations](#) in [preterm infants](#)."

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