



Presentation Abstracts and Objectives

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A Case Study Approach to Critical Thinking Skills for Lactation Professionals

There are many reasons infants struggle to latch and feed well. Critically thinking through a case involves assessing all the variables that may be impacting feedings. This is no easy task when we must consider what is happening on the parent's side and the infant's side. How can we put all the pieces of a complex case together in order to be an effective lactation detective? This session is designed to help providers implement critical thinking skills in order to think outside the box when it comes to difficult cases.

Session Objectives:

- Understand how to assess more complex feeding situations
- Identify the root cause(s) of the feeding issue at hand
- Implement personalized care plans to help dyads coping with unique issues
- Utilize critical thinking skills when supporting dyads through challenging feeding situations

Clinical Lactation Tools: Bottles, Tubes and Shields, Oh my!

There are many ways to love and feed a baby. Having in-depth knowledge about feeding-related tools should be a part of any lactation professional's toolbox. In this session we will review a variety of tools such as shield, supplemental feeding options, bottles, and more. Tools may be needed for a variety of reasons. We will explore critical thinking strategies for tool selection. Clinicians that have a strong foundation in feeding tools can often help family's find creative ways to meet their feeding goals faster than just a 'wait and see' approach. We will explore how certain tools fit, flow, work, and when to implement them. This session will have you re-thinking how you think about feeding tools and when to use them.

Session Objectives:

- Utilize critical thinking skills when selecting clinical lactation tools
- Select tools that help families work on their unique feeding goals
- List risks and benefits of nipple shields and supplementation methods including cup and finger feeding, bottle and at-breast supplementation

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The Lactation Professional's Role in Supporting Optimal Healing Outcomes for the Newborn Post-Frenectomy

A hotly debated topic among clinicians is post-frenotomy care. There are a few emerging theories and clinical practice ideas when it comes to frenotomy aftercare for the newborn. Clinicians and families sometimes struggle with the idea of how to balance efficient post-frenotomy care while minimizing stress and discomfort of the newborn. While the evidence strongly points to the benefit of frenotomy for tongue-tied neonates, there is little published evidence regarding best aftercare practices. During this presentation we will explore the lactation consultant's role in supporting the family post-frenotomy. We will also discuss neonatal pain and pain management strategies and the impact of stress on wound healing. This presentation will help provide a well-rounded view of frenotomy aftercare strategies lactation professionals should consider when supporting families coping with post frenotomy concerns.

Session Objectives:

- Describe the role of the lactation professional post frenotomy
- Describe how oral wounds heal
- Identify at least 3 post frenotomy pain relief and care plan ideas

Tongue and Lip Tie: A Comprehensive Approach to Assessment and Care

“Tongue tie” (clinically known as ankyloglossia) is of great interest in some settings and is still quite unknown in others. Tongue tie can restrict proper lingual functionality and mobility. These restrictions can cause significant feeding difficulties for infants. Feeding challenges can be complex and multi-factorial, therefore a comprehensive understanding of infant oral anatomy can help clinicians better assess and care for the patients they serve. The speaker will present on signs and symptoms of tongue tie, related health concerns, assessment and treatment strategies, and the status of the evidence base. This presentation is designed to meet the needs of anyone who clinically assesses infants, works with feeding issues, and/or provides lactation care.

Session Objectives:

- Identify available evidence around ankyloglossia
- Understand the impact of tongue tie on infant feeding
- Identify basic oral assessment techniques for infants
- Appreciate collaboration and teamwork when dealing with oral restrictions
- Identify targeted care strategies for dyads coping with ankyloglossia

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Connection and Care: Virtual Support for Tongue-Tied Infants

Providing virtual care has become a reality for many lactation professionals. How can we best consult families of tongue-tied babies virtually? How do we get the visual and functional information we need to guide our care when we are 'hands-off'? This session will discuss strategies for health professional working remotely including assessment, documentation, care plan formation, teamwork, and the referral process. While different than in-person consultations, virtual connection and excellent care for tongue-tied babies and their families is possible! Learning to adapt our practice style, gather information digitally, and pivot with the times is vital for our role in providing comprehensive lactation support virtually.

Session Objectives:

- Identify strategies to gather clinically relevant information when working virtually
- Describe techniques to assess oral anatomy and function when working remotely
- Identify documentation, teamwork, and referral strategies for virtual consulting

Will it hurt? Frenotomy Aftercare Strategies to Optimize Healing Outcomes for the Newborn

There are a few emerging theories and clinical practice ideas when it comes to frenotomy aftercare for the newborn. Clinicians and families sometimes struggle with the idea of how to balance efficient post-frenotomy care while minimizing stress and discomfort of the newborn. While the evidence strongly points to the benefit of frenotomy for tongue-tied neonates, there is little published evidence regarding best aftercare practices. During this presentation we will explore the neonatal experience of pain along with pain management and oral healing strategies. We will also discuss the impact of stress on wound healing and focus on ways to help keep babies calm and happy through the recovery process. For families coping with a tongue-tied baby, it is often a physical and emotional roller coaster ride. This presentation will help provide a well-rounded view of frenotomy aftercare issues as well as clinical, care strategies to optimize healing and feeding for the newborn.

Session Objectives:

- Identify the development of pain perception in the fetus
- Describe some of the short- and long-term consequences of painful experiences in the neonatal period
- Describe ways to assess neonatal pain
- Identify pre and post frenotomy pain relief strategies



Lactation after Loss

After losing an infant, grieving parents may still have to cope with postpartum issues, including lactation. This presentation reviews and addresses care options for lactation concerns after pregnancy, neonatal, or infant loss. Currently, lactation care and advice after loss varies greatly. Lactation consultants are instrumental in providing parents with anticipatory guidance and evidence-based care. Implementing system-wide training and education regarding this topic will help families receive the information they need to deal with the physiological aftermath of infant loss.

Session Objectives:

- Identify types of loss and physiology of lactation after loss
- Explore the emotional, physical and ethical issues surrounding lactation after loss
- Review past and present practices in regards to lactation after loss
- Understand ‘best practice’ lactation care plan strategies following a loss

Beyond the Basics of Latch: Support Strategies for Helping Babies When the Basics Aren’t Enough

In a perfect world, every baby would latch beautifully right after delivery and feed happily ever after. In reality what we often see is that most moms and babies need a little help to get feeding off to a good start. Many dyads need a lot of help. And a few parent/baby pairs need a miracle to breastfeed successfully. How can we best help those tough cases? There are many reasons babies struggle to latch and feed well. Some issues may include structural issues, physical discomfort, respiratory concerns, medical issues, digestive issues, poor feeding tool choices, prematurity, and more. Many providers are frustrated when they are unable to help a dyad latch and feed successfully. Using case studies, we will review challenging situations and the assessment techniques and care plan strategies that helped. This session is designed to help providers implement critical thinking when it comes to difficult cases.

Session Objectives:

- Understand how to assess more complex breastfeeding situations
- Understand how to perform a comprehensive lactation-related breast assessment
- Identify the root cause(s) of the feeding issue at hand
- Implement personalized care plans to help dyads coping with unique issues
- Utilize critical thinking skills when supporting dyads through challenging feeding situations



Common Infant Digestive Concerns: Dietary Sensitivities, Reflux and Beyond

This session will focus on common concerns regarding infant digestive health and useful support strategies that care providers can incorporate into their work with families. We will discuss what's normal and what's not in regard to stooling, spit up/reflux, colic/fussiness, food sensitivities, and more. Many parents are coping with babies that are uncomfortable and unhappy due to digestive health concerns. Dealing with a fussy, uncomfortable baby is emotionally and physically draining. Having a basic understanding of infant gut health and care strategies can be useful tools for any type of practitioner working with infants.

Session Objectives:

- Understand basics of infant gut health and the enteric nervous system
- Understand the physiological process of how infants can develop digestive issues and food sensitivities
- Identify optimal newborn output patterns
- Identify care plan ideas for infants coping with digestive concerns
- Describe how sensory and anatomical issues impact digestion
- Identify “red flags” and when to refer

Beyond Fenugreek: An Individualized Approach to Dietary and Herbal Galactagogues

While some clinicians might roll their eyes when ‘lactation cookies’ are mentioned we know foods and herbs have long been used to nourish the postpartum parent and enhance lactation. Some topics this talk aims to cover: Does nourishment matter when it comes to breastmilk quality or quantity? How can we approach galactagogues for lactating parents in an individualized way? How can clinicians evaluate evidence and determine safety regarding galactagogues? We know that parent coping with milk supply concerns are often desperate to ‘try anything’. Clinicians have an important role in helping families understand the risks and benefits of galactagogues. By helping parents identify resources and information around foods and herbs, we can help empower them to make informed choices.

Session Objectives:

- Understand why foods and herbs may be needed to support optimal lactation
- Understand the different ways that galactagogues support lactation
- Understand a personalized approach to selecting appropriate galactagogues
- Locate resources on galactagogues and herbal safety

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Placenta Medicine as a Galactogogues: Tradition or Trend?

During this presentation, we aim to explore the fascinating topic of placentophagy. Our discussion focus will be on placenta medicine as a purported galactagogue. For some parents, insufficient milk supply impacts their ability to fully feed their infants. Many seek holistic options to increase their milk supply. Amongst some communities, placenta medicine and/or postpartum placenta consumption is a practice on the rise. What do we know about the benefits and risks of this practice? We will review historical and modern day evidence, the difference between mammalian and human placenta consumption, and discuss ethical considerations regarding placentophagy/placenta medicine as a galactagogue.

Session Objectives:

- Identify reasons why some choose to consume their placenta in the postpartum period
- Describe the differences between animal and human placenta consumption
- Identify available historical and modern research regarding placenta as a galactagogue
- Describe ethical considerations around placenta medicine

Infant Oral Assessment: Exploring Anatomy and Function Beyond the Frenulum

Is it a tongue tie? What else could be going on? Having a deeper understanding of the orofacial complex and functional oral motor patterns can help take your assessment techniques to the next level. Curious about jaws, tongues, palates, oral tone, suck patterns, and more? This presentation will focus on understanding the finer details and the bigger picture when it comes to infant oral assessment. We will cover the basics of infant oral anatomy, assessment techniques and optimal vs suboptimal movement, strength, and sucking patterns.

Session Objectives:

- Demonstrate the basics of infant oral anatomy assessment
- Describe immature vs. mature suck patterns
- Identify at least three aspects of oral assessment



Prenatal Assessment and Support

This session will cover new thoughts on prenatal breast assessment and parental support strategies in the prenatal period. Health professionals working with parents in pregnancy have a unique chance to assess and discuss feeding questions and concerns with clients in the prenatal period. There are many factors that can impact lactation success including certain health concerns, medications, breast/chest development, endocrine issues, etc. Parents appreciate having thoughtful insight regarding these issues prior to delivery. In my clinical experience a resounding theme when feeding issues arise from a condition that may have been identified prenatally is, "why didn't anyone tell me?" During this session, providers will learn how to assess breast/chest anatomy prenatally, identify potential red flags for lactation success and cultivate a meaningful dialog in order to discuss these concerns with the parents they serve.

Session Objectives:

- Identify prenatal lactation considerations
- Describe the importance of lactation education and support in the prenatal period and beyond
- Understand breast/chest assessment techniques for the prenatal period
- Identify prenatal lactation “red flags” and when to refer

Bodywork: Another Resource for Feeding Support

The purpose of this talk is to identify various types of manual therapy techniques that can support optimal feeding for the dyad. Bodywork is not a fad, cultures around the world have used manual therapy techniques to support well-being for more than 5000 years. Bodywork is a general term that describes a variety of therapeutic, hands-on modalities. Bodywork can be a resource for feeding support because it aims to address or physiological issues that may be impacting optimal feeding. Depending on the issue at hand, certain bodywork modalities may be more suited towards the problems than others. An overview of therapeutic techniques will be followed by actual case studies involving manual therapy as part of a care plan strategy to improve infant feeding issues.

Session Objectives:

- Identify various types of bodywork that can be used to support feeding issues
- Assess basic aspects of anatomical structure and function that may impact feeding
- Comprehensively view structure as it impacts feeding ability and provide targeted care plan strategies
- Identify resources for pediatric bodywork, including literature and qualified practitioners.



1–2 Day Workshops and Session with Dyads

Clinical Skills Workshop

Melissa is passionate about improving parental/infant assessment and clinical skills for lactation consultants and allied healthcare professionals. This clinical skills workshop focuses on working directly with parent/infant dyads. Traditionally, the hosting organizers will invite dyads from the community to come participate. Melissa will guide participants through an in-depth, comprehensive lactation consultation that involves parental/infant assessment and the formation of comprehensive clinical care plan. Participants will learn about advanced clinical assessment and care strategies. Melissa's goal for participants is that they view the feeding dyad holistically, looking at lactation issues from a physical and emotional perspective. Melissa firmly believes that excellent clinical skills must go hand-in-hand with excellent counseling skills in order for lactation professionals to truly make a difference.

Session Objectives:

- Describe how to assess parent and infant
- Identify the root cause(s) of presenting feeding challenges
- Describe appropriate care plan strategies

Oral Function: Assessment and Comprehensive Care for the Pre-Crawling Infant

This 2 day intensive workshop is designed for health professionals involved in the care of the pre-crawling infant. The course is designed to enhance the care provider's understanding, assessment and management of oral function issues as they impact infant feeding and development. We will have case studies, interactive virtual activities, group work, discussion time, and more. Melissa and Michelle will help you level-up your assessment and clinical care techniques when it comes to supporting babies coping with compromised oral function and complex feeding challenges.

Session Objectives:

- Understand how to assess more complex infant feeding situations
- Implement personalized care plans to help dyads coping with unique issues
- Utilize critical thinking skills when supporting dyads through challenging feeding situations



Herbal Support for Lactation and Infants

A 1 or 2 day intensive workshop designed for birth and health professionals and those involved in the parental-infant health community. The course is designed to enrich the professional's understanding of how herbs can be used for lactation and infant issues. Plant medicine around the world has traditionally been an important part of postpartum care for parents and babies. In this workshop, we will cover herbal care strategies for parental issues such as milk supply concerns, breast and nipple care ideas (engorgement, mastitis, sore/damaged nipples, etc). We will also discuss herbal support for infant issues such as digestive problems (colic, reflux, etc), teething, immune support, sleep, and more.

Session Objectives:

- Define some basic principles of herbal medicine
- List reasons herbal support may be useful in lactation and infant related care
- Identify herbal evidence, resources and safety material
- Explain basic herbal dosing principles
- Identify some basic herbal care plan strategies for lactation and infant issues

Lactation Intensive for Birth and Health Professionals

A 1 or 2 day intensive continuing education workshop designed for birth professionals and those involved in the parental-infant health community. The course is designed to update and enrich the professional's understanding of lactation issues and provide strategies useful in assisting the feeding dyad. Topics to be covered include: lactation concerns in pregnancy/birth/early postpartum, new thoughts on positioning and latch, milk supply and supplementation issues, nipple pain, holistic lactation care ideas, gut health, tongue tie, and more.

Session Objectives:

- Review recent changes within clinical lactation practice
- Understand lactation considerations in pregnancy, birth and postpartum
- Identify parent and infant issues that impact lactation
- Understand how to assess more complex breastfeeding situations
- Identify the root cause(s) of the feeding issue at hand
- Implement personalized care plans to help dyads coping with unique issues
- Utilize critical thinking skills when supporting dyads through challenging feeding situations
- Identify “red flags” and when to refer