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Breast-feeding and deleterious oral habits in mouth and nose breathers.

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AIM: Breast-feeding promotes several benefits in childhood, among them favoring the nasal breathing. In the present study, the relationship between breathing pattern and the history of breast-feeding and of deleterious oral habits was determined. STUDY DESIGN: clinical with transversal cohort. MATERIAL AND METHOD: The study population consisted of 62 children ranging in age from 3 years and 3 months to 6 years and 11 months who were submitted to otorhinolaryngologic evaluation to determine nasal and mouth breathers and to a speech language pathologic interview. The otorhinolaryngologic evaluation involved the following exams: anterior rhinoscopy, oroscopy and radiologic examination. The parents of the children were questioned about the form of feeding (natural and/or artificial), the duration of breast-feeding and the presence of deleterious oral habits (suction and biting). The Fisher exact test was used to compare groups regarding the presence and absence of habits and the different periods of breast-feeding. RESULTS: The breast-feeding period was longer among nasal breathers and was concentrated in the period between 3 and 6 months of age. Regarding the use of bottle, the results showed that most of the children in both groups used this type of feeding during the first years of life, with no significant difference between groups ($p=0.58$). There was a marked presence of deleterious oral habits among mouth breathers, with a statistically significant difference between groups regarding suction ($p=0.004$) and biting habits ($p=0.0002$). CONCLUSION: Mouth breathing children were breast-fed for a shorter period of time and had a history of deleterious oral habits compared to nose breathers.

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