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Functional, quality of life, and neurodevelopmental outcomes after congenital cardiac surgery

Throughout the past few decades, advances in cardiology, neonatal intensive care, and surgical techniques have resulted in a growing cohort of thriving school-aged children with previously lethal complex congenital heart diseases. While survival has increased, there remains significant morbidity following repair including neurodevelopmental sequelae. Compared to children with a structurally normal heart, these infants and children have a higher frequency of abnormalities in tone, feeding, and delayed developmental milestones, as well as challenges with speech and learning disabilities, while a higher proportion of adolescents suffer from problems with processing speed, executive function, and a unique set of medical hardships related to exercise intolerance and obesity, medication burden, and mental health comorbidities. Innovative perioperative techniques and early psychosocial intervention in these young survivors has shown that despite the obstacles, the majority of these children can grow to have fulfilling lives with intelligence and social skills in the normal range. Additionally, a comprehensive medical home aids in optimizing the quality of life for these children and their families.

Biography

Megan L Ringle received her medical training at St. George's University School of Medicine and completed her Pediatric Residency at Miami Children's Hospital in Miami Florida. She is currently a neonatal- perinatal fellow at Lucile Packard Children's Hospital, Stanford University School of Medicine. Her clinical interests include the ICU care of newborns with critical congenital heart disease and the neurodevelopmental outcomes and follow up of premature infants and neonates with congenital heart disease.

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