

## Introduction

- Motor differences emerge early during infancy among children who become diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).<sup>1</sup>
- These may be linked to social communication deficits and restricted repetitive behaviors<sup>2</sup>
- Physical therapists (PTs) play a role in the early detection of ASD by assessing early motor behavior.
- Only 18% of children received PT services during the month of diagnosis<sup>3</sup>

## Objectives

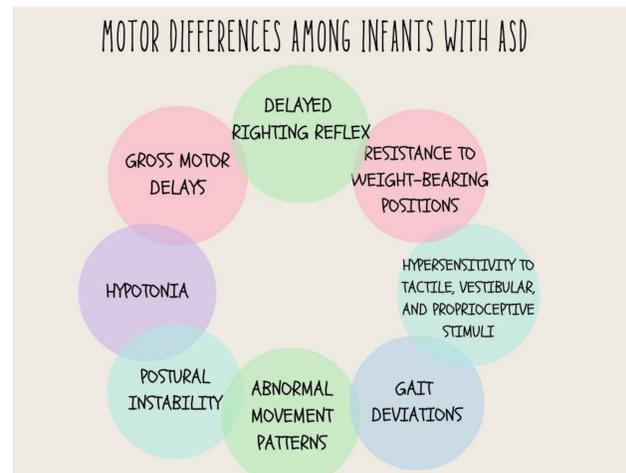
Investigate how PTs can recognize ASD earlier in infancy; emphasize their value on the multidisciplinary team that screens and treats ASD.

## Methods

- Conduction of a literature review to explore motor differences among infants with autism.
- Semi-structured interview with a PT who treats infants that later receive autism diagnoses.

## Results

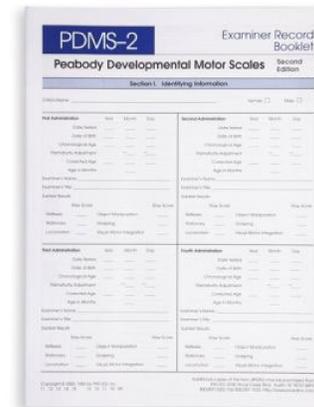
Infants at risk for ASD demonstrate a wide variety of motor abnormalities that span multiple areas of early motor functioning.



### PT Tests and Measures of Early Motor Behavior

- Peabody Developmental Motor Scales -2
- Early Learning Accomplishment Profile
- General Movement Assessment (GMA)\*

- PTs play a role in providing compassionate support for parents as they navigate a possible autism diagnosis.<sup>4-7</sup>



\*The GMA s currently being researched for its application to infants at risk for ASD



## Conclusions

- PTs can provide essential knowledge of a child's development to the health care team.
- PT's play a vital role in supporting families who have a child with autism.
- Motor differences among infants with autism are highly complex and heterogenous.
- The GMA will take many years of research to apply to infants with ASD.

## References

Scan the QR Code for references:



## Acknowledgements

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