



## Study Finds Infant Sucking Performance May Facilitate Early Detection of Adverse Neurodevelopmental Outcomes

NFANT Labs' innovative 'nfant Feeding Solution' yields new developmental insights

**April 25, 2017 (Atlanta)** – A new study published in Thieme's *Seminars in Speech and Language* indicates that an infant's ability to feed, or sucking performance, may correlate with neurodevelopmental outcomes. The article, "Quantifying Neonatal Sucking Performance: Promise of New Methods," features the use of NFANT Labs' flagship product, nfant® Feeding Solution.

The study highlights the value of neonatal sucking assessment as a part of routine clinical care in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and the potential it holds for early detection of preterm infants at risk for adverse neurodevelopmental outcomes.

The paper was published as part of the Journal's 20th anniversary special edition highlighting the state of the science in the field of pediatric dysphagia. It was conducted at the University of Kentucky and led by NFANT Labs' co-founder Dr. Gilson Capilouto.

"Safe and efficient feeding is the most complex skill of the newborn and a criteria for hospital discharge," said Dr. Capilouto. "Our results reinforce the idea that a baby's ability to suck safely and efficiently may be a window into the brain that can give us insight into how a baby is developing. Early detection of feeding difficulties means better developmental outcomes and cost savings for healthcare providers and families."

The paper demonstrates that metrics generated from feeding patterns collected at hospital discharge using nfant Feeding Solution accurately differentiated full-term infants, preterm infants at high risk for poor neurodevelopmental outcomes, and preterm infants at low risk.

The study followed preterm infants in the hospital as they matured – from initiation of feeding through discharge and follow-up visits several months out. Full-term infants were also included to establish a standard of sucking performance for comparison. The goal was to find distinguishing traits in sucking patterns that would help clinicians identify those infants at risk for feeding issues and/or long-term neurodevelopmental problems.

Findings from the study highlight the need to include objective neonatal sucking assessment as part of routine clinical care and the relationship neurodevelopment may have with feeding performance. The study is ongoing and will continue to follow infants until they are one year of age in order to correlate early sucking ability and scores on standardized tests of development. This study is one of several ongoing studies investigating the use of nfant Feeding Solution with other at-risk populations such as infants born with opioid addiction, infants of diabetic mothers, and infants at risk for developmental disabilities such as autism and cerebral palsy.

### About NFANT Labs

NFANT Labs is an emerging digital health and medical device company based in Atlanta, Georgia, dedicated to infant feeding. Its first product, nfant Feeding Solution, is the first FDA-cleared "Internet of Things" (IoT) medical device for the NICU. Improving the standard of feeding care by collecting objective data and tracking feeding progression has the potential to shorten NICU stays, reduce readmissions and deliver substantial savings. For more information about NFANT Labs, all of its products, and disclaimers about this release, please visit [www.nfant.com](http://www.nfant.com).