



CHAPTER 42

The surgeon-dentist's view on the "Little Tongue Test" in Primary Care: a scoping review

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ABSTRACT

Objective: Describe through national and international literature the knowledge of the dental surgeon in relation to Ankyloglossia and the Little Tongue Test in Primary Care throughout the country. A scoping review was carried out (Joana Briggs Institute), where 07 articles published from 2011 to 2019 were selected. With mapping and analysis of the results we constituted the thematic axes: tongue test and its relationship with professionals; ankyloglossia; oral health and maternal-child network. The data showed that there is little knowledge by the professionals regarding the tongue test and ankyloglossia, and that the dentist is little included in the maternal and child network in the Primary Care setting. It was concluded that there is no integrality and insertion of the oral health team with the family health team when it comes to the maternal and child network. Furthermore, it was observed that the CD does not have enough knowledge and does not perform the Tongue Test in the Basic Health Unit.

Keywords: Dentist, Lingual frenum, Primary care, Ankyloglossia.

1 INTRODUCTION

Ankyloglossia, also known as stuck tongue, is a developmental anomaly, originated due to a defect in the apoptotic process of embryonic cells of the oral floor and lower tongue. This alteration causes changes in the insertion of the frenulum, characterizing the short lingual frenulum and the limitation of correct tongue movement, causing interference in physiological functions such as speech and swallowing. Such changes can and should be diagnosed soon after the birth of the baby, in order to avoid problems such as failure in the development of the stomatognathic system, early weaning, generated by discomfort and pain of the mother during breastfeeding and thus leading to loss or little weight gain of the newborn (De Oliveira, De Lima & Fernandes, 2011).

In 2014, Martinelli, Marchesan & Félix, 2014, created a protocol that evaluates the baby's lingual frenulum, with the purpose of facilitating the diagnosis of this alteration. The protocol is known as the Little Tongue Test and became a law sanctioned in 2014 (Law 13.002/2014), which makes it mandatory to

perform the lingual frenulum assessment protocol in neonates in hospitals and maternity hospitals. This is a simple, quick, painless, and easy to apply test, performed in the first 48 hours, in the first month or until the baby is six months old, by means of anatomical and functional screening (Da Silva et al., 2020).

To perform this test, the most suitable professionals are dental surgeons, pediatricians, speech therapists, and nurses. However, any properly trained health professional is able to perform the "Little Tongue Test", although only dental surgeons and doctors can perform the necessary surgical procedure (Cavalcante & Da Silva, 2019).

In 2019, a survey conducted, it was found that most health professionals interviewed in this study, were unaware of the application of the protocol, its existence and the law that regulates the "Little Tongue Test" (Pinto et al., 2019).

Primary Care is the main gateway to the Unified Health System (SUS), and is characterized by a set of health actions and services, including health promotion and prevention. Its main strategy is the Family Health Strategy (ESF), which is composed of a multidisciplinary team, in order to work with integrality and equity (Giovanella et al., 2020).

According to the National Plan for Brazilian Oral Health (PNAB), the oral health team is also responsible for health promotion and prevention actions, and thus the "Little Tongue Test" protocol can be performed by the dental surgeon in Primary Health Care. However, we know the difficulty of integrating the ESF, ESB (oral health team), and municipal management.

Talking about integrality, in Primary Health Care it is of fundamental importance that the work involves the professionals who are part of the family health team and the oral health team, increasing and adding knowledge, acting in an interdisciplinary vision, thus increasing the resolution of the users' health problems, looking at them as a whole. For this to happen effectively, local management has the obligation to be participatory, especially in relation to permanent education, because it is from it that professionals are trained for possible changes in the work and consequently, positively affecting the lives of people (De Araújo et al., 2018).

The programs agreed and structured to offer Primary Care to child health have as main objectives health promotion, disease prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and monitoring, requiring the participation of the user, which is the child involved, their parents and families, in addition to the professionals who work in the Family Health Strategy (FHS), causing the integration of various professional classes that work not only in Primary Care, but also that this care will extend to the various levels of health, secondary and tertiary (Consolaro, 2014).

Given the above, this work aims to describe through literature the dentist's knowledge about Ankyloglossia and the importance of early diagnosis through the Little Tongue Test in Primary Care throughout the country.

2 METHODS

The scoping review, recommended by the Joanna Briggs Institute, is a form of knowledge synthesis that addresses an exploratory research question and its objective is to map key concepts, types of evidence, and gaps in research related to a given topic, with the purpose of synthesizing and disseminating the results of studies on a subject. Thus, a systematic scoping analysis was performed, and the data were analyzed and synthesized in narrative form.

In the present review, the PCC strategy was used for question formulation, being "P" for population/participants, "C" for the concept to be investigated, and "C" for context. Adjusting the object of study to the strategy P: health professionals; C: tongue test and ankyloglossia; C: public health, the guiding questions are: What is the knowledge in dentistry regarding the tongue test? What is the knowledge of the dentist inserted in Primary Care about Ankyloglossia and its early diagnosis?

The research strategy and the entire review process were based on the Joanna Briggs Institute review methodology described in five phases: Identification of the research question; Identification of relevant studies; Selection of studies; Mapping of data; and Clustering, synthesis, and reporting of results (Siqueira et al., 2019).

The research was consolidated through the collection and selection of scientific articles found in the electronic databases Virtual Health Library (VHL), SciELO and Lilacs, in the period of the last ten years (2011 to 2021). The search for studies in the grey literature included: google academic and CAPES database. The search strategy adopted in each database, descriptors/keywords used and the references selected are described in (Chart 1).

Chart 1- Search strategy in the databases and number of results

Database	Strategy	Number of articles
Lilacs	("little tongue test" AND "dentist" OR "lingual frenulum") [keywords]).	64
BVS	("little tongue test" AND "dentist" OR "lingual frenulum" AND "primary care" OR "primary care" [keywords]).	12
Scielo	(" little tongue test" AND "lingual frenulum" [keywords]).	06
Google Acadêmico	("dentist" AND "primary care" OR "primary care" AND "little tongue test" AND NOT "surgery" [keywords]).	28
Capes	(little tongue test" AND "primary care" [keywords]).	01

Source: own author.

Inclusion criteria: articles in English and Portuguese, from 2011 to 2021, that were available online in the databases. Exclusion criteria: articles that ran away from the proposed theme of the study and that were not available.

The search strategy identified a total of 111 studies, 28 of which were found on Google Scholar, where, after applying the inclusion criteria, 50 studies remained. Subsequently, the titles of the 50 studies were read, excluding 12 articles that did not meet the proposed theme, leaving 38 articles to read the abstracts. After reading the abstracts, 8 articles were included in the Scoping Review. The results of the search are presented in a flow chart in the PRISMA model (Figure 1). The data search, title and abstract reading were done by two reviewers who are also authors of this study and agreed on the choice of articles to be included.

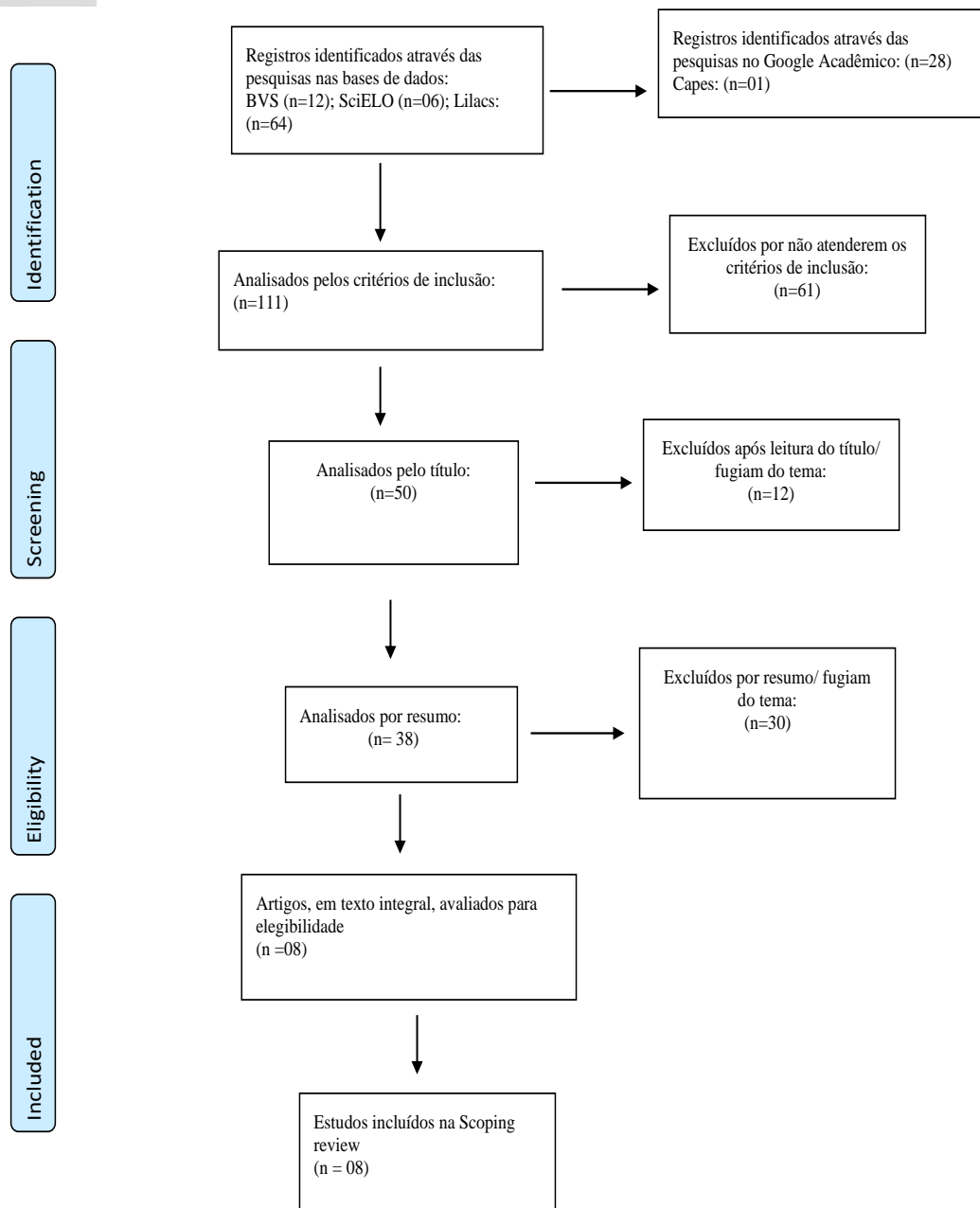
The 08 studies selected to be part of this review were mapped by means of a table (Chart 2) with the following information: author/year of publication; title; database/magazine of publication; objective; type of study. The studies were organized in ascending order according to their year of publication. After reading the main data, the articles were divided according to the themes presented in (Chart 3); which brings the following themes: the Little Tongue Test and its relationship with professionals; ankyloglossia; oral health and the maternal-child network.

Initially, a descriptive analysis of the data was carried out, characterizing the final considerations/conclusion of each study. Subsequently, the articles were read and analyzed following the steps of the scope review, seeking to synthesize the most relevant thematic axes of the works included.

Figura 1: Fluxograma Prisma adaptado para Revisão de Escopo: Figure 1: Adapted Prism Flowchart for Scope Review
 Figura 1- Fluxograma Prisma adaptado para Revisão de Escopo.



PRISMA adaptado Revisão de Escopo



Fonte: autoria própria

TRADUÇÃO: FIGURA 1

Prisma Adaptado Revisão do Escopo: Adapted Prism Scope Review

Registros identificados através das pesquisas nas bases de dados: Records identified through the database searches

Registros identificados através das pesquisas no Google Acadêmico: Registrations identified through the Google Scholar Searches

Analisados pelos critérios de inclusão: Analyzed by the inclusion criteria

Excluídos por não atenderem os critérios de inclusão: Excluded for not meeting the inclusion criteria

Analisados pelo título: Analysed by title

Excluídos após leitura do título / fugiram do tema: Excluded after reading the title / not related to the subject

Analizados por resumo: Analyzed by Abstract

Excluídos por resumo / fugiam do tema: Excluded by abstract / not on topic

Artigos, em texto integral, avaliados para elegibilidade: Articles, full-text, assessed for eligibility

Estudos incluídos na Scoping Review: Studies included in the Scoping Review

Chart 2. Information from the articles included in the Scoping Review

Author/Year	Title	Database/ Journal	Objective	Study Type
Melo et al (2011)	Ankyloglossia: case report.	Lilacs/ RSBO.	To describe a case of ankyloglossia in a 2-year-old female child seen at the Child Care Clinic of the Pediatrics Department of the Federal University of Paraná.	Case report.
Martinelli et al (2017)	Elaboration and development of a web site about the Little Tongue Test.	SciELO/ CEFAC Journal.	Develop a website about the Little Tongue Test.	Applied research.
Cavalcante et al (2017)	Oral health in early childhood: perceptions of ESF professionals.	Google Scholar/ Journal of APS.	To understand the perception of FHS professionals regarding the comprehensive oral health care of children.	Qualitative/ exploratory study.
Penha et al (2017)	The Little Tongue Test in the Dentist and Primary Health Care nurses' view.	Google Scholar / Archives of Health Investigation.	To evaluate the knowledge of CD and nurses who are part of Basic Family Health Units in the Sertão of Paraíba.	Cross-sectional study.
Pomini et al (2017)	Oral health education for pregnant women, puerperae and early childhood: report of an extension activity.	Google Scholar / Brazilian Journal of University Extension.	Report the actions on educational and preventive levels in Oral Health.	Experience Report.
Pomini et al (2018)	Knowledge of pregnant women about the Little Tongue Test in neonates.	Lilacs/ UNESP Odontology Journal.	To verify the knowledge about LTT and its relation to the sociodemographic profile of pregnant women.	Tracking Study.
Pinto et al (2019)	Health professionals' knowledge about the diagnosis and management of ankyloglossia in infants.	Lilacs/ Health and Research.	To evaluate the knowledge of health care professionals regarding the diagnosis and clinical management of lingual frenulum in infants.	Cross-sectional study.
Karkow et al (2019)	Lingual frenulum and its relation to breastfeeding: a health team's understanding.	Lilacs/ Communication Disorders.	To verify the understanding of health professionals regarding the relationship between lingual frenulum and breastfeeding.	Descriptive study.

Source: own author.

Chart 3. Thematic axes found in the articles included in the Scoping Review.

Thematic Axis	Authors	Nº of articles
Little Tongue Test and its relation with professionals	Martinelli et al (2017); Penha et al (2017); Cavalcante et al (2018).	03
Ankyloglossia	Melo et al (2011); Pinto et al (2019).	02
Oral health and the maternal-child network.	Pomini et al (2018); Pomini et al (2017); Karkow et al (2019).	03

Source: own author.

3 RESULTS

This scope review work had as main objective to identify the knowledge in the national and international scientific literature about the knowledge of the dentist inserted in primary care in relation to ankyloglossia and the Little Tongue Test.

Of the 08 articles analyzed it was observed that 01 was a screening study, 01 a descriptive study, 01 a case report, 01 an applied research, 02 cross-sectional studies, 01 a qualitative/exploratory study, and 01 an experience report. As for the databases, it was observed that 04 were found in the Lilacs base, 01 in SciELO base, 03 in google academic (gray literature).

For further synthesis, a chart (Chart 4) was prepared, specifying the final conclusions/conclusion of each work chosen for this scope review, in order to verify whether they reached their due objectives.

Chart 4. C Final considerations/conclusion of the articles included in the Scoping Review.

Author/Year	Title	Final considerations/conclusion
De Oliveira Melo et al. (2011)	Ankyloglossia: case report.	The routine examination of the lingual frenum allows the identification of abnormalities of its insertion and enables preventive measures for interferences during the breastfeeding period.
Martinelli et al. (2017)	Elaboration and development of a web site about the Little Tongue Test.	From this work, the "Little Tongue Test" website can be accessed at www.testedalinguinha.com .
Cavalcante et al. (2017)	Oral health in early childhood: perceptions of ESF professionals.	It was observed that the organization of the work process of the EqSF is decentralized and not focused on the individual risk of the user and/or its coverage territory, with oral health care for children in the ESF still restricted to the dental service, as well as the lack of systematic monitoring by the ESF, evidencing a hegemonic biomedical model based on curativism.
Penha et al. (2017)	The Little Tongue Test in the Dentist and Primary Health Care nurses' view.	It was found that there is no continuing education to accompany the professionals and that they perform according to their knowledge.
Pomini et al. (2017)	Oral health education for pregnant women, puerperae and early childhood: report of an extension activity.	The authors found that the project helps to create a bond between the pregnant/puerperal women and the students/residents, which results in an improvement in the acquisition and maintenance of oral health of mother and baby. It also helps in the development and training of the participants in the care of this public.
Pomini et al. (2018)	Knowledge of pregnant women about the Little Tongue Test in neonates.	The knowledge of pregnant women about LTT is superficial, especially among those with lower education and income, which accentuates the need for public strategies focused on improving the quality of care offered to the mother-child binomial.
Pinto et al. (2019)	Health professionals' knowledge about the diagnosis and management of ankyloglossia in infants.	It was concluded that there was a great lack of knowledge about the mandatory tongue test and difficulty in correctly diagnosing ankyloglossia in infants.

Karkow et al. (2019)	Lingual frenulum and its relation to breastfeeding: a health team's understanding.	Given the speeches of the participating professionals, it was found that there is no consensus on the understanding of the relationship between breastfeeding and the lingual frenulum.
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Source: own author.

4 DISCUSSION

In view of the searches made in the databases, the eight papers included in the Scope Review were divided according to the theme they presented, so the synthesis will be made in three topics.

4.1 LITTLE TONGUE TEST AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH PROFESSIONALS

First of all, it is necessary to know what the Little Tongue Test is and what its benefits are. The LTT was developed with the purpose of identifying ankyloglossia early in preferably newborn babies, reducing risks of future problems in the stomatognathic system and also preventing early weaning (Martinelli et al., 2017).

The Protocol for tongue frenulum assessment in babies, better known as the Little Tongue Test, was developed and validated during master's and doctoral studies at the Bauru School of Dentistry, USP, and in 2014, more precisely on June 20, federal law 13,002 was passed requiring the application of the LTT in maternities and hospitals throughout Brazil. However, even with the law being sanctioned, there is a large majority of newborns who do not perform the LTT. For this reason, a website was created with the objective of instructing parents and professionals on the LTT and ankyloglossia (Martinelli et al., 2014).

The insertion of the dental surgeon in the family health team has been a challenge since the implementation of the oral health team in Primary Care (BHC). It aims to enable an expanded interdisciplinary and comprehensive approach to users, particularly children in the early childhood phase. According to a study by Cavalcante, De Araújo Filho & de Saboia, 2017 found that the perception of professionals of the Family Health Strategy regarding the oral health of children in early childhood is minimal, if there is a knowledge, but flawed and ineffective. Comprehensive planning is not done with quality and even less its execution, leaving the dental childcare uncovered, thus it is implied, that the professionals of the oral health team do not perform the LTT in AB.

A study conducted through a questionnaire adapted from Nascimento, Soares and Costa (2015), composed of seven questions, applied in 42 FHUs, urban area, in the city of Patos, Paraíba, identified that most CD professionals and nurses of the PCU, did not know and did not apply the LTT, but that they became interested in learning (Penha et al., 2018).

4.2 ANKYLOGLOSSIA

Ankyloglossia, popularly known as tongue-tie, is characterized by a change in the lingual frenulum, causing limitations in tongue movements, which may cause problems related to swallowing and speech. This modification of the insertion extends from the tip of the tongue to the lingual alveolar ridge and it can

be visible already at birth. Its definition varies according to the position in which the lingual frenum is inserted, and may be: short, thick muscular and fibrous frenum (De Oliveira et al., 2011).

Partial ankyloglossia is more common, while the fusion of the tongue with the floor of the mouth is a rare condition. This abnormality hinders the movements of the tongue, affecting mainly speech and swallowing, besides later, it can psychologically affect those affected and not treated early in relation to bullying (De Oliveira et al., 2011).

In relation to swallowing, we highlight breastfeeding in the first months of life. Tongue clamping interferes with breastfeeding, making it impossible for the newborn to make the correct grip, causing pain for the mother, malnutrition for the child and early weaning, thus weakening one of the most mentioned issues in the mother-child network of the single health system, which is exclusive breastfeeding until six months of life (De Oliveira et al., 2011).

A study by Pinto et al. (2019) evaluated the knowledge of healthcare professionals, regarding the diagnosis and clinical conduct for the treatment of ankyloglossia in infants. A questionnaire was made where questions were asked about the evaluation of the lingual frenum, totaling 84 health professionals, being them: doctors, dentists, speech therapists, and pediatricians, most working in the Family Health Strategy. Only 21 professionals answered the questionnaire satisfactorily, and it was concluded that most of these professionals had no knowledge about ankyloglossia and its form of diagnosis through the Little Tongue Test.

4.3 ORAL HEALTH AND MOTHER-CHILD NETWORK

Some of the educational approaches within public health that can and should be done by the professionals that make up the oral health team are child dental care and prenatal dentistry. During pregnancy until the puerperal period and early childhood, it is extremely important that the mother understands the influence that her own actions will have on the baby's life. In an extension project "Oral health education for pregnant women and early childhood", which had as its main objective to bring prevention and health promotion to pregnant and postpartum women and early childhood, it was found to have a positive impact on the lives of these participants, focusing on the issue of exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months of life (Pomini et al., 2017).

Still bringing to the context of health education aimed at pregnant women, Pomini et al. (2018), developed a study in which they measured the knowledge of pregnant women in a given territory regarding the diagnosis of ankyloglossia. It was found that most had misinformation about what LTT was and that the lower their level of education, the less information was obtained. After these data, it was concluded that it was necessary for the oral health team to instruct and monitor these pregnant women.

The tongue plays an important role during breastfeeding, and when there are problems in its development, it gets damaged, which can easily lead to early weaning. It is known that breastfeeding not only has nutritional benefits, but also creates a mother-child bond and is important for the correct

development of the stomatognathic system. Given this, the importance of early diagnosis of ankyloglossia in newborns, because from this test done in a simple and correct way, future problems will be avoided and benefits will be gained (Karkow et al., 2019).

5 CONCLUSION

Dentistry in public health still becomes a sector without resources and with few investments by the management and often by the professionals themselves. The lack of knowledge regarding the Little Tongue Test in public health services, especially when it comes to Primary Care, is visible, and the recognition of the benefits of early diagnosis of ankyloglossia is far from happening.

Childcare and the participation of the dentist in the Rede Cegonha (Stork Network) are totally weakened, with no planning for such follow-up, and as seen in the Scoping Review, there are not many studies on the subject for scientific support. The construction of scientific articles is necessary for a correct conclusion.

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