

NEC Imposters: Distinguishing NEC from Other Abdominal Pathology

Internet Enduring Material

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Content was originally presented as part of NEO: The Conference for Neonatology on February 20, 2025.

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Time to Complete

The estimated time for completion of this Internet Enduring Material is 50 minutes.

Target Audience

This presentation is intended for physicians, advanced practice providers, and other clinicians practicing within the Neonatology specialty.

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Disclosure of Relevant Financial Relationships

Josef Neu, MD, faculty for this educational activity, has the following relevant financial relationships with ineligible companies to disclose: Global Scientific Council-Nestle Nutrition Institute; Consultant-Glycome; Scientific Advisory Board-Astarte, Medela, Arla Foods, Kate Farms; Research Grant-Infant Bacterial Therapeutics; Speakers Bureau-Mead Johnson; Expert Witness-Winston & Strawn LLP. *FDA Disclosures: none reported.*

Timothy Biela, MD, Nicole Brenson and Jaya Sariga, NNP-BC, planners of this educational activity, have no relevant financial relationships with ineligible companies to disclose.

Commercial Support

There is no commercial support for this enduring educational activity. *Please note: the content of this activity was originally presented at NEO: The Conference for Neonatology on February 20, 2025, which was supported in part, through a restricted medical education grant from Mead Johnson Nutrition.*

Overview

Necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC) remains one of the most devastating gastrointestinal emergencies in neonates, yet its definition, diagnosis, and management continue to pose significant challenges. This presentation critically examines the definition, diagnosis, and classification of NEC, highlighting the limitations of current frameworks, such as Bell's staging. The discussion also focuses on gaps in understanding, biomarkers, and prevention strategies, and advocates for a revised classification of neonatal intestinal injuries to support more accurate diagnosis and targeted care.

Objectives

At the conclusion of this activity, the participant will be able to:

- Define neonatal necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC) and review current clinical diagnostic criteria, including the use and limitations of Bell's staging.
- Analyze whether NEC represents a single disease or a spectrum of intestinal disorders with overlapping features.
- Review current insights into NEC pathophysiology, including available biomarkers and the effectiveness of preventive strategies in clinical practice.
- Examine the clinical implications of redefining NEC, including the need for a revised classification to guide early diagnosis, management, and therapeutic approaches.

ACGME/ABMS Competencies

- Medical Knowledge

IOM Competencies

- Employ Evidence-based Practice

Participation and Credit

Participants are expected to review all content in the video, access reference materials as needed for additional self-directed learning, take and score 75% or greater correct on the post-test, and complete the evaluation in order to earn *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)*[™], or nursing contact hour(s).

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