

Feeding Problems, Gastrointestinal Symptoms and the Impact for their Families in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Compared with Typically Developing Children

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BACKGROUND

It is increasingly recognised that children with ASD often have feeding problems and shows Gastrointestinal (GI) symptoms. Although the reports of the feeding problems and GI symptoms seems to be similar for Typically Developing (TD) children, there is some suggestion that these problems are more prevalent in children with ASD. The identification of these problems seems to be complex and challenging. Persistent problems may have other impacts for their families.

METHOD

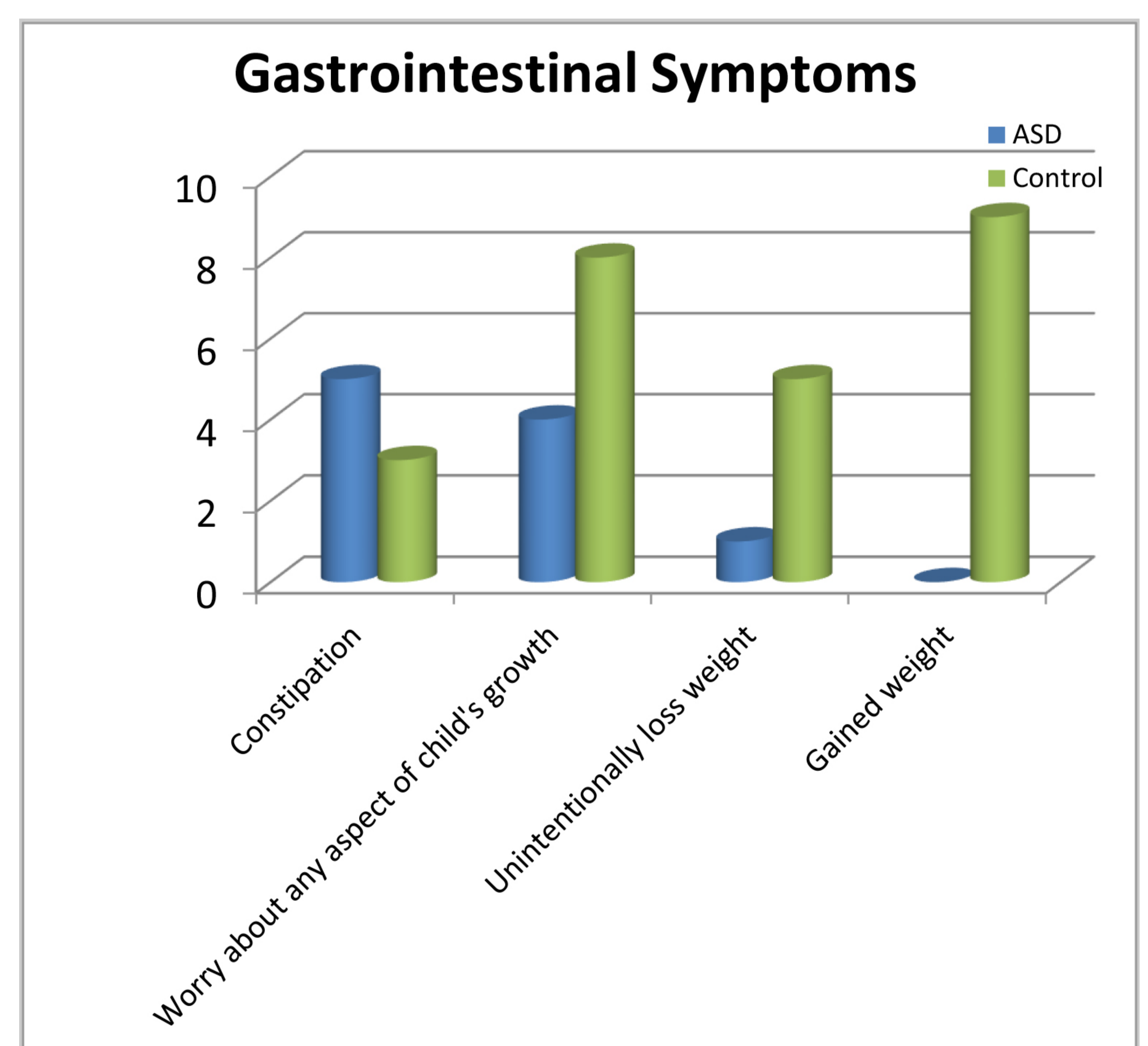
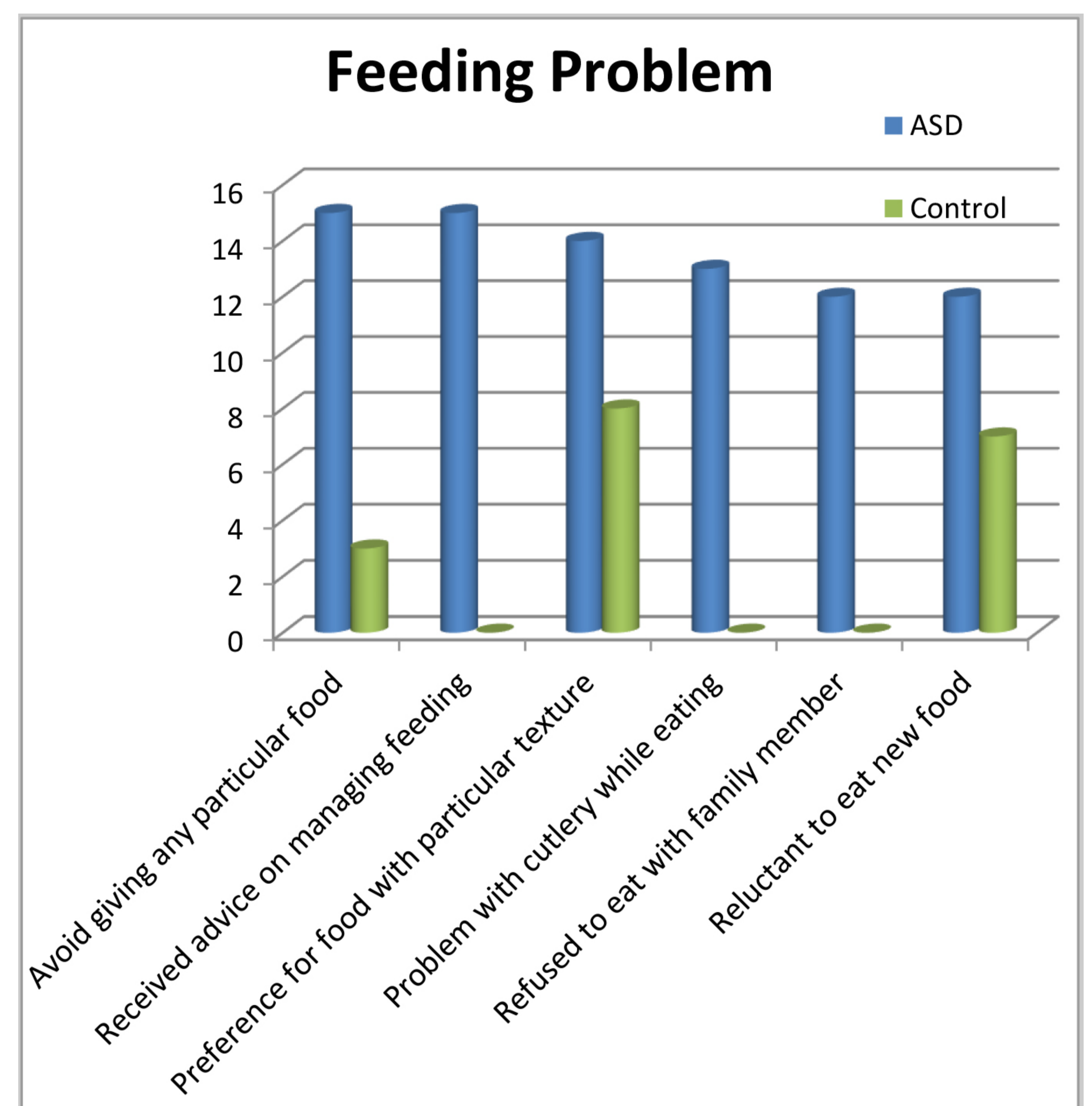
Participants of this study were 15 parents with ASD children and 15 parents of TD children. The parents were asked to fill a questionnaire using The Brief Structured Questionnaire for the Early Identification of Feeding Problems and Gastrointestinal Symptoms in Primary School Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (THE BEFG - ASD).

OBJECTIVE

To compare the frequency of feeding problems, GI symptoms and the impact of these problems for the family.

RESULT

There were significant difference in preference food with particular textures $p=0.018 < 0.05$, problem with cutlery control while eating $p=0.00 < 0.05$ and refused to eat with family members $p=0.00 < 0.05$ between ASD children and TD children. All of the ASD children (100%) had been on a restricted diet. 33.3% ASD children had constipation. Not all families with ASD children realised impact of the problem to their families.



CONCLUSION

Children with ASD showed more problems in eating than TD children. It needs to be addressed by parents and clinician, although the problem was not realised by parents.