



Websites in Portuguese about oropharyngeal dysphagia in elderly

Websites em português sobre disfagia orofaríngea no idoso

Websites portugués sobre disfagia orofaríngea en el adulto mayor

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Abstract

INTRODUCTION: Telehealth resources are important for the transmission of knowledge about oropharyngeal dysphagia in elderly. **OBJECTIVE:** To determine the quality and comprehensiveness of websites in Portuguese on oropharyngeal dysphagia in the elderly, aimed at the general population. **METHODS:** We used the Google search tool, with the keywords “oropharyngeal dysphagia” AND “elderly” and “orientation” AND “oropharyngeal dysphagia” AND “elderly”. Inclusion criteria were: websites and blogs in Portuguese that provided information and/or guidelines on oropharyngeal dysphagia in the elderly due to aging and/or neurological or oncological diseases. The selected websites were analyzed for quality by two judges, using the Health On the Net Code (HON Code) protocol, regarding the coverage (subjects covered), use of pictures/videos and their central objective. **RESULTS:** Nineteen websites were selected, observing a low HON Code score for the attribution items (source of information published) (mean 0.8) and updates (information on the update dates of the subject addressed) (mean 0.6), presenting the average overall score of 7.87, in addition to observing a narrow range of subjects. Regarding the availability of illustrations, observed that 90% of the websites did not present figures and 89% did not present videos to facilitate content retention. As for the central objective of the website, dysphagia was the central theme in 6% of websites. **CONCLUSION:** The websites presented a partial quality according to the ethical criteria, with a restricted scope, did not present the oropharyngeal dysphagia as

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a central theme, besides the non use of illustrations during the content. Thus, it is suggested to improve the existing websites on oropharyngeal dysphagia in the elderly.

Keywords: Deglutition Disorders; Aged; Health Promotion.

Resumo

INTRODUÇÃO: Recursos de Telessaúde são importantes para a transmissão do conhecimento sobre as disfagias orofaríngeas no idoso. **OBJETIVO:** Localizar, avaliar a qualidade e abrangência de *websites* em português sobre as disfagias orofaríngeas no idoso, voltados à população em geral. **MÉTODOS:** Foi utilizada a ferramenta de busca Google, com as palavras-chave “disfagia orofaríngea” AND “idoso” e “orientação” AND “disfagia orofaríngea” AND “idoso”. Foram considerados como critérios de inclusão: sites e blogs em português que disponibilizassem informações e/ou orientações sobre disfagias orofaríngeas no idoso decorrente do envelhecimento e/ou de doenças neurológicas ou oncológicas. Os *websites* selecionados foram analisados quanto à qualidade por dois juízes, utilizando o protocolo *Health On the Net Code* (HON Code), quanto à abrangência (assuntos abordados), utilização figuras/vídeos e seu objetivo central. **RESULTADOS:** Dezenove *websites* foram selecionados, observando baixa pontuação do protocolo HON Code para os itens: atribuição (fonte das informações publicadas) (média 0,8) e atualizações (informações quanto às datas de atualização do assunto abordado) (média 0,6), apresentando a pontuação geral média de 7,87, além de observar restrita abrangência dos assuntos. Quanto à disponibilidade de ilustrações, observou-se que 90% dos *websites* não apresentaram figuras e 89% não apresentaram vídeos para facilitar a retenção do conteúdo. Quanto ao objetivo central do website, a disfagia foi o tema central em 6% dos *websites*. **CONCLUSÃO:** Os *websites* apresentaram uma qualidade parcial segundo os critérios éticos, com uma abrangência restrita, não apresentaram a disfagia orofaríngea como tema central, além da não utilização de ilustrações no decorrer do conteúdo. Desta forma, sugere-se o aperfeiçoamento dos *websites* já existentes sobre as disfagias orofaríngeas no idoso.

Palavras-chave: Transtornos de Deglutição; Idoso; Promoção da Saúde.

Resumen

INTRODUCCIÓN: Recursos de Telessalud son importantes para la transmisión del conocimiento sobre las disfagias en el adulto mayor. **OBJETIVO:** Localizar y evaluar la calidad y alcance de *websites* en portugués sobre las disfagias orofaríngeas en adultos mayores, direccionadas a la población en general. **MÉTODOS:** Se utilizó la herramienta de búsqueda Google, con las palabras clave “disfagia orofaríngea” AND “adulto mayor” y “orientación” AND “disfagia orofaríngea” AND “adulto mayor”. Se consideraron como criterios de inclusión: *websites* y blogs en portugués con informaciones y/o orientaciones sobre disfagias orofaríngeas en el adulto mayor debido al envejecimiento y/o a enfermedades neurológicas u oncológicas. Los *websites* seleccionados fueron analizados cuanto a la calidad, por dos jueces, utilizando el protocolo *Health On the Net Code* (HON Code), cuanto a la exhaustividad de los temas contemplados, al uso de figuras /vídeos y a su objetivo central. **RESULTADOS:** Se seleccionaron 19 *websites* con baja puntuación del HON Code para: asignación (fuente de la información publicada) (promedio 0,8) y actualizaciones (información sobre las fechas de actualización del asunto abordado) (promedio 0,6), presentando la puntuación general promedio de 7,87, además de observar restringido alcance de los asuntos. En cuanto a la disponibilidad de ilustraciones, se observó que el 90% de los *websites* no presentan figuras y el 89% no presentó vídeos para facilitar la retención del contenido. En cuanto al objetivo central de los *websites*, la disfagia fue el tema central en el 6%. **CONCLUSIÓN:** Los *websites* presentaron una calidad parcial según los criterios éticos, con un alcance restringido, no presentaron la disfagia orofaríngea como tema central, además de no utilizar ilustraciones en el transcurso del contenido. De esta forma, se sugiere el perfeccionamiento de los *websites* ya existentes sobre las disfagias orofaríngeas en adultos mayores.

Palabras claves: Trastornos de Deglución; Adulto Mayor; Promoción de la Salud.

Introduction

The Interactive Telehealth facilitates the knowledge dissemination for the professionals' improvement, as well as for the population to learn about a particular subject aiming at the promotion of health¹. Therefore, for the promotion of health through interactive Teleducation, there are several teaching resources and dynamics that allow the knowledge to reach a larger number of people from different socioeconomic levels and age groups, involving the population in its role within the Community².

As an example of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), are the *websites* that allow you to create an environment with greater interactivity, providing more accesses and motivation to the user. The *websites* offer a possibility of access to lots of information, which in contrast, increases the risk of a range of erroneous or incomplete information, without any scientific or appropriate updates^{3,4}.

Analyzing the access of *websites* which bring health information, it has been seen that they show themselves being effective to empower the population in general, but their most present a restricted access, limiting the possibilities that a website presents⁵.

To ensure the quality of the health information offered on the internet, the Health On the Net Foundation (HON) developed the HONCode certification, free, that aim advise and encourage Internet users to be cautious in the use of medical information obtained on the network, in accordance with a set of ethical rules⁶.

The dysphagia is characterized by a disorder of swallowing or any food bolus transit difficulty from the mouth to the stomach⁷. The process of aging itself already brings changes in roles, as is the case of swallowing^{8,9}. In addition, this aging population is susceptible to have other complications worsening the swallowing, it is necessary to educate the population¹⁰.

In this way, it is observed the importance to promote information for prevention and assistance for the elderly with possible changes in the swallowing function, and also for their caregivers, among professionals in the area of health and, especially, their family members. Provide information in these cases, would allow an early diagnosis and important guidelines for the conduct of limi-

tations. Thus, the present study aimed to locate, evaluate the quality and completeness of *websites* in Portuguese on the oropharyngeal dysphagia in the elderly available to the population in general.

Method

It was used the Google search tool with the keywords "oropharyngeal dysphagia", "elderly", "guidance", "oropharyngeal dysphagia" and "old" consulting first 10 pages, with 10 *websites* each. Also attempts were made to search on Yahoo search, however, it was not considered by not bringing different results, when compared to the *websites* located in Google.

We adopted as inclusion criteria: websites and blogs in Brazilian Portuguese that allocate information and/or guidelines on oropharyngeal dysphagia in the elderly due to aging and/or neurological diseases or cancer and were excluded from the professional directed-only sites, scientific articles, and pages that submit information only related to childhood dysphagia.

The selected websites were analyzed regarding the quality by two researchers using the protocol *Health on the Net Code - HON Code*¹¹, which is based on the property, purpose, author's classification, assignment, interactivity and *website* updates. Each one of these characteristics is subdivided into items that receive a score and the higher the score obtained, total of 13 points, the better the quality of the *website*. It was analyzed the average score of the two researchers for all selected sites.

The *websites* scope evaluation verified if there was information about what is dysphagia, their possible causes, symptoms, treatment options and dysphagia in the elderly patient specificities, where each item was judged in: covered fully; partially covered and not covered.

It was also evaluated the resources facilitators of information (videos and pictures) use, classified as: sufficient quantity, insufficient and missing.

Finally, the *website* was classified by its main goal: totally turned to the dysphagia; partially returned to the dysphagia; wasn't about dysphagia. This selection and analysis was performed by two researchers, being considered the result only by consensus between them, who assessed all *websites* considered.

Results

There were 19 selected *websites*, being 181 excluded, since referring to sites with scientific

profile (articles, theses, monographs, researches, and book chapters), brochures, and online courses for professionals, resumes for professionals and universities curriculum.

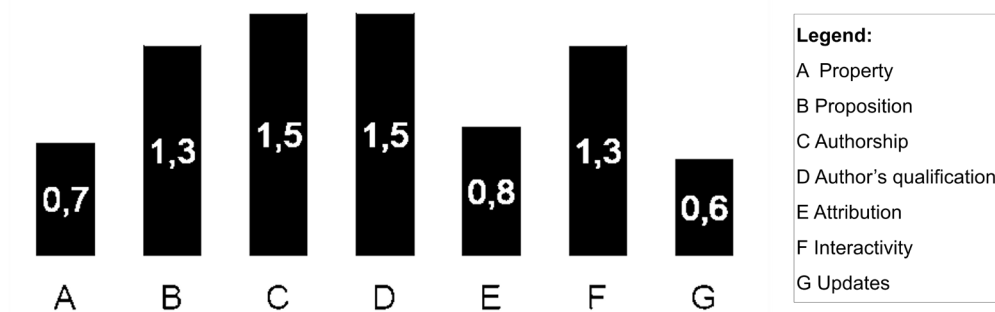


Figure 1. Websites about oropharyngeal dysphagia in the elderly included

The HON Code protocol demonstrated a low score for items: assignment, which refers to the citation of the source of information published (average 0.8) and update, which is the information regarding the addressed issues dates (average 0.6),

while the author information (about the author) (average 1.5) and qualification of the author update (information on the qualifications of the author) (average 1.5) showed higher scores. In the overall, the score obtained the average of 7.87.

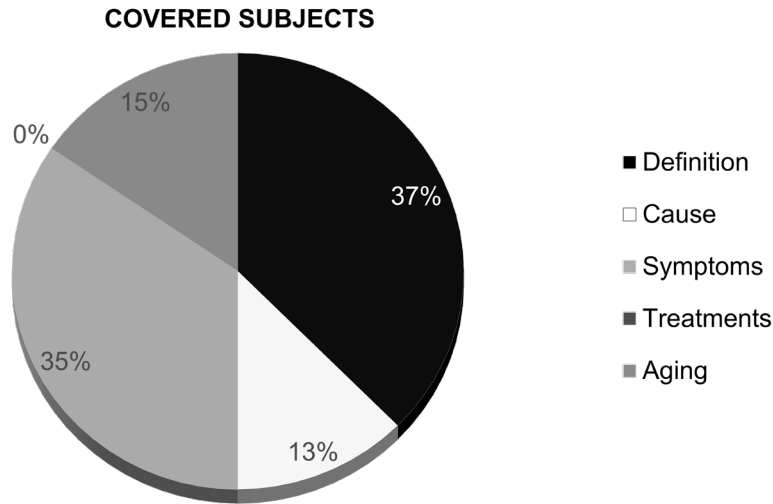
Graphic 1. Average of each item scores in the HON Code of websites of oropharyngeal dysphagia in the elderly



When considering the websites scope, we found out that the subjects dealt with in the most complete manner were “definition” and “symp-

oms”, demonstrating a gap in information about the aging, causes and treatment.

Graphic 2. Percentage of subjects fully covered on average in the websites of oropharyngeal dysphagia in the elderly



As the availability of illustrations, it was observed that 90% of *websites* have not brought illustrative figures and 89% have not made videos. The *websites* that presented some illustration were so inadequate.

Finally, it was found that the main goal was the dysphagia in 6% of *websites*, 15% was partially on this goal and 79% did not have this main focus.

Discussion

The information and communication technology resources applied to health became important as knowledge amplification instruments, which may reach a greater number of people, including different socioeconomic groups and ages^{12,13}. For dysphagia, the use of these resources is also necessary, which both are already observed Teleducation studies for health professionals and for Teleassistance¹⁴. However, investigations on the Teleducation to the population in general are still scarce.

In this study, we considered 19 *websites* related to the topic of oropharyngeal dysphagia in the elderly, observing a reduced amount of *websites* available, when compared with the literature on the topic of deleterious oral habits located 36 *websites*¹⁵ and the theme of the orofacial functions, 35 *websites*¹⁶.

The deleterious oral habits theme found only 3 *websites* with the seal HON¹⁵, 68.75% maximum fulfilling the criteria. In another study, more specifically in the area, we found out that the *websites* on the orofacial functions (suction/breastfeeding, breathing, speech, chewing and swallowing) fulfilled half of the principles proposed by the Health on the Net Code¹⁶. In the present study, it was also verified that the *websites* met partial evaluation criteria of the HON Code.

The *websites* on the orofacial functions, demonstrated 49.8% on average meet the content scope¹⁶, being even lower this percentage in the present study, on average, 33.6% of coverage, considering the topics definition, causes, symptoms, treatment, and dysphagia in the elderly.

Most of the *websites* analyzed did not show a sufficient quantity of videos and pictures, this factor interferes with the ease of information understanding. According to Houts, (2006), the communications in health care could be more efficient with the use of images, as for example insert images in health education materials that already exist, to improve adherence to the health instructions¹⁷.

Even performing a specific search on oropharyngeal dysphagia in the elderly, there is a scarcity of *websites* with this central theme, making the good quality information location available in a language that is easy for patients, caregivers and family.

In this way, the speech pathologist, who is the professional that works directly with the oropharyngeal dysphagia cases, must guide the patient and his family about this clinical, as well as lead them to appropriate searches for new information, ensuring the validity of the content, as well as the access and their understanding ease¹⁸.

Other studies in the literature that addressed the sites assessment quality in the oropharyngeal dysphagia area were not found, which hindered the findings comparison in this study. However, validity of the theme stands out, by need to broaden the information for swallowing disorders prevention, as pointed out by the study which has developed and implemented a CD-ROM on the dysphagia in graduate students in Speech Therapy. With the use of text, graphics, audio and video it could exemplify the themes and stimulate students' learning¹⁹.

In this sense, new studies are needed to improve the quality of information provided on *websites* in the area of oropharyngeal dysphagia. It is suggested that new *websites* are planned, constructed and evaluated, on this issue, in a careful and judicious process, as is already happening in other areas of Audiology²⁰⁻²⁴.

Conclusion

It was verified that the *websites* met half of the criteria of the HON Code, bringing, in their majority, the definition of dysphagia and the symptomatology, but showed low utilization of facilitating resources for the understanding of the information, being that the websites did not present dysphagia as a main theme, it is important to improve the *websites* that already exist on the oropharyngeal dysphagia in the elderly.

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