

*A Preliminary Report***THE EFFECT OF POWDERED SKIMMED MILK IN RESTORING NUTRITION IN CHILDREN WHO HAVE HAD KWASHIORKOR**ISOBEL ROBERTSON, B.A., M.B., CH.B., D.P.H., *Maternal and Child Welfare Officer, City Health Department, Cape Town*

For the past 3 years the City of Cape Town has participated in the State Health Department's scheme for the distribution of powdered skimmed milk to malnourished children. The benefit derived from the milk, while clinically obvious, is difficult to demonstrate by the usual method of having two groups of children, one on milk and one not on milk, and noting the progress of the two groups. One does not feel justified in depriving a group of malnourished children of milk solely for the purpose of such an experiment.

In the course of a follow-up series of notified cases of kwashiorkor,\* which was done over a year, the necessary information came to hand. All the children were offered milk at the Child Welfare Clinics after discharge from hospital. Some attended regularly and received milk regularly, some irregularly and some not at all.

The weights of the 21 children (Group 1) who were between 8 and 30 months on notification and who attended regularly for milk throughout the year are compared with those of the 16 children (Group 2) in the same age group who did not attend at all.

The weights are expressed as regression lines, A at the time of notification and C 12 months after notification, and are compared with the Boston 50th Percentile.

The improvement in nutritional standard in the children who had powdered skimmed milk regularly compared with the improvement in those who did not, shows a marked difference over the year, demonstrating the effect of powdered skimmed milk in recovery from severe malnutrition.

\*The full result of the follow-up study was presented to the Congress of the South African Paediatric Association in October 1964.

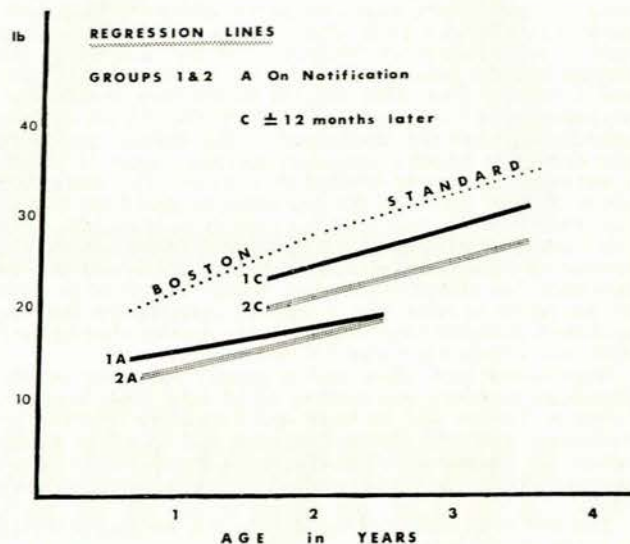


Fig. 1. Regression lines of weights of 2 groups of children, all of whom were notified as suffering from kwashiorkor, and all aged between 8 and 30 months at the time of notification.

Group 1. Children who had powdered skimmed milk regularly for a year after discharge from hospital.

Group 2. Children who had no supplementary milk.

A. Lines representing weights on notification.

C. Lines representing weights 12 months later.

These are compared with the Boston 50th Percentile.