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FLAVORING AGENTS AND ACCEPTANCE OF
ANTIBIOTIC MIXTURES
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Flavor of a drug is a neglected eventhough important quality of pediatric medicines. We compared the acceptance of two pharmacologically identical phenoximethylpenicillin potassium and erythromycin ethylsuccinate mixtures having different flavoring agents in a randomised blind manner in hospitalised infants. The time a nurse needed to give the drug to the child was recorded and a score (1 to 4) of the acceptance was given. The mean time to give erythromycin brand 1 was 29 seconds (SD 21, n=20) and the mean time to give brand 2 16 seconds (SD 13, n=18). The significance of the difference was tested after a logarithmic transformation because of the nonnormal distributions of the times and was found to be statistically significant ($p<0.05$). The mean scores were 2.9 (0.6) and 3.4 (0.5) with a significant difference ($p<0.025$). The differences between the two phenoximethylpenicillin products were insignificant. We suggest that in the case where there are pharmacologically identical drugs with different flavoring agents the taste of the drug should be taken into account. The time needed to give a drug could be used as an objective measure of the acceptance of the drug even in infants and small children.