Catch-up growth of supine length/height of very low birth weight, small for gestational age preterm infants to adulthood.

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Catch-up Growth of Supine Length/Height of Very Low Birth Weight, Small for Gestational Age Preterm Infants to Adulthood

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Objective

To analyze linear growth of very low birth weight (VLBW), small for gestational age (SGA; < 10th percentile) preterm infants from birth as to catch-up or no catch-up growth.

Study design

VLBW SGA preterm infants (n = 46) with primarily symmetric intrauterine growth restriction from the Bonn Longitudinal Study were compared with 62 appropriate for gestational age (AGA) VLBW preterm and 73 term infants and with their parents.
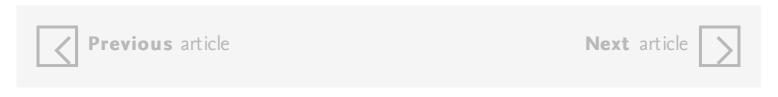
Results

Forty-six percent of VLBW SGA (21 of 46) had complete height catch-up by adult age,

and most became taller than target height (TH) (15 of 21; 71%). The others did not catch up; most of them remained shorter than TH (18 of 25; 72%) after initial catch-up followed by catch-down growth. Mean adult height z-score was lower than that for birth length. Mean body mass index was similar in the catch-up and no catch-up groups (21.8 and 21.3, respectively) and lower than in the controls (23.2). Approximately 1/2 of the head circumference (HC) catch-up children achieved height catch-up as well.
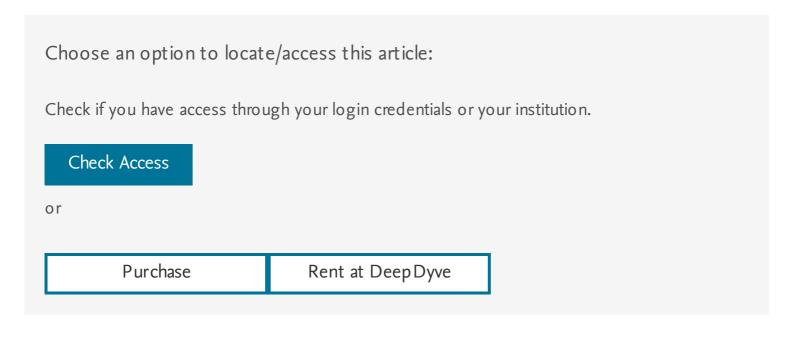
Conclusions

Height catch-up extended beyond age 6 years, independent of HC growth. We could not predict height catch-down or successful catch-up.

AGA, Appropriate for gestational age; AH, Adult height; BMI, Body mass index; EQ, Energy quotient; HC, Head circumference; MH, Maximum height before the catch-down; MIT, Mannheimer Intelligence Test; MPH, Midparental height; PI, Ponderal index; SD, Standard deviation; SDS, Standard deviation score; SGA, Small for gestational age; TH, Target height; VLBW, Very low birth weight

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