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LONG TERM STUDY OF GIRLS WITH PREMATURE THELARCHE

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Premature thelarche (PT) may have its onset at any time in childhood and does not require specific treatment, since it can sometimes predict the development of precocious puberty.
The aim of the present study was to examine whether the onset of premature thelarche can be used to identify a group of girls at increased risk of developing precocious puberty.

PATIENTS AND METHODS: 24 girls with premature thelarche were followed for at least 6 years. Mean age at the time of the study was 4.7±3.1 yrs. Girls were divided into two groups. 5 girls (Group A) presented with breast enlargement between 1-3 years of age, while 19 (Group B) between 3-7.5 yrs. Plasma levels of E2, FSH, LH, PRL, D.E.H.A-S and bone age were determined in all patients.

RESULTS: 4/5 girls of group A (80%), whereas only 6/19 (31.5%) had complete regression within 3 years from follow up. 11/19 (57.8%) Group B girls in contrast to only 1/5 (20%) Group A girls experienced changes in pubertal breast stage until normal puberty spontaneously occurred whereas 2 girls (10.5%) of Group B progressed to idiopathic precocious puberty. Endocrinologic investigation (E2, FSH, LH, PRL, DEHA-S) was within normal range in both groups. Bone age was appropriate for chronological age in all girls.

CONCLUSION: Our data suggest that the age of onset of breast enlargement can be a useful marker and have predictive value in distinguishing those patients at increased risk of progressing towards precocious puberty.