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## The nutritional preoperative problems in children with ventricular septal defect (VSD) in rural Thailand

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The purpose of this study was to explore the nutritional problems of children with VSD in rural Thailand because they have a long waiting time for surgery. An ethnographic approach was used to explore and understand the nutritional problems caregivers' experienced in caring for their child with VSD within their cultural context; especially the experiences of how the families managed to overcome the issues of maintaining optimal weight prior to surgery. Ten main caregivers who were taking care of children with VSD aged 6 months to 4 years who were waiting for surgery, and ten health professionals who dealt with these children were purposively selected. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, field notes, observations, and photographs with the ten main caregivers at their homes and the health professionals were interviewed at a regional hospital. A thematic approach was used to analyse the data. The triangulated findings generated themes indicating that children with VSD in rural Thailand had difficulty in gaining or maintaining optimal weight prior to surgery, resulting from some of the knowledge the caregivers used which was inappropriate for supporting weight gain in their child. Also both the health professionals and caregivers in rural areas had limited nutritional knowledge for taking care of children with VSD, who were waiting for surgery. Additionally there were inadequate resources provided at the clinic to help support caregivers.

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