INTRODUCTION

One of the important features of the perinatal period is the high incidence of central nervous system insult. This is particularly true in premature infants (born before 37 weeks) and especially in the very premature (less than 33 weeks) (Volpe, 1976).

The currently accepted method for demonstrating the brain in newborns and infants is computerized tomographic scanning, by which method ventricular size can be assessed and other abnormalities such as focal mass lesions, congenital anomalies, subdural fluid or blood collections and vascular malformations are demonstrated (New and Scott, 1976).

Difficult or prolonged delivery is an important cause of intracranial hemorrhage and cerebral damage in newborns. Anoxia produces stasis and anoxic damage to the capillary walls, petechial hemorrhage or edema. It is specially likely to cause rupture of the fragile venae terminales in the subependymal areas surrounding the lateral ventricles in preterm babies (Di Chiro et al., 1978).