

Orthopaedic Connection

Hip Dislocation in Children

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Transforming patient information into patient understanding.

I have often thought about the tremendous breadth of Orthopaedic Surgery as it pertains to age. I see newborns in the nursery with hip dislocations and club feet and I operate on 102 year olds from the Masonic Pathways with hip fractures. Amazing.

Let me back up 102 years and go back to the nursery.

Hip Dysplasia

Developmental dislocation of the hip is also termed dysplasia. It is an abnormal formation of the hip joint. It occurs before birth. The exact cause is unknown. The ball is not stable in the socket. The ball may be loose or even completely dislocated at birth.

Missed or Untreated

A disaster for the poor child. Pain, limping, arthritis at a very early age.

Who Gets It?

- Girls more often
- First born more often
- Babies born in breech position

Early diagnosis

Hip dislocation can be detected by a careful newborn exam. This is done by the Pediatrician or Family Doctor. If they have a question they ask me to examine the baby. Hips found normal at birth are rarely found to be abnormal later. Pediatricians screen for this on the first exam and at every well baby check up. If not diagnosed early, treatment becomes complicated and uncertain. Ultrasound is valuable in a newborn if there is any doubt.

Methods of Treatment

- Newborn
A simple positioning device termed a Pavlik harness. It is worn for several months to keep the ball in the socket which stimulates normal hip socket formation.
- 1 – 6 months
A Pavlik harness may still work but if it doesn't the ball might need to be positioned in the socket under anesthesia and maintained with a body cast (spica).
- 6 – 24 months
Open surgery may be needed followed by a body cast.
- After 2 years
Deformity has become severe and major open surgery is often needed followed by a body cast.

Everything Depends On Early Treatment

Timing is everything as they say. If detected in the first few weeks of life (ideally in the nursery!) and treated in a Pavlik harness children end up with a normal hip joint.

My patients put their trust in me and what I do improves the quality of their lives.

Gratiot County Herald Archive and Office Website

I sincerely hope all of our loyal readers will take advantage of an endless amount of musculoskeletal information. It is easy! Log onto www.orthopodsurgeon.com.

It gives access to all Website articles, Your Orthopaedic Connection and every GCH article from most recent to the first. Full text! It covers everything I do in the office and hospital.

Good Health. Good life. All the best to you.

Dr. Haverbush