

Calls to avoid lower limb swaddling as incidence of childhood hip condition triples

Developmental dysplasia of the hip (DDH), also known as hip dysplasia, occurs when the ball and socket of the hip do not fit together in their 'normal' position. Sometimes this is due to abnormal development and/or lack of growth of the hip joint. Treatment is optimised when diagnosis occurs within the first 3 months of life.

The latest hip dysplasia research findings, published yesterday in the Medical Journal of Australia, highlights an increase in late diagnosed developmental dysplasia of the hip in South Australia, with reports from New South Wales and Western Australia confirming the increasing incidence is occurring nationally.

Alarming, the researchers found that the rate of late diagnosis (>3 months of age) in South Australia, has risen from 3.5% of all DDH cases in babies born between 1988 to 2003, to 11.5% of all DDH cases in babies born between 2003 to 2009.

The researchers are calling for increased awareness, education, and avoidance of inappropriate lower limb swaddling to reverse this worrying trend.

Australia's first Healthy Hips Week, 10-16 April 2016, highlights the importance of knowing the risk factors for and potential indicators of hip dysplasia. Healthy Hips Week is an initiative by hip dysplasia health-promotion charity, Healthy Hips Australia. Sarah Twomey, Founder of the charity, says, "Hip dysplasia affects people across the lifespan. It should be on everyone's radar; waiting until a diagnosis of it is too late."

Healthy Hips Week has been welcomed by the DDH parent community and receives backing from the researchers as well as the Australian Orthopaedic Association. Bruce Foster, staff specialist orthopaedic surgeon at the Women's and Children's Hospital in Adelaide and Patron of Healthy Hips Australia says, "Healthy Hips Week is a very positive initiative".

Nicole Williams, Adelaide paediatric orthopaedic surgeon and University of Adelaide researcher, and spokes-person for the research group is also supportive of the awareness efforts of Healthy Hips Australia. "Increased hip dysplasia awareness and education is desperately needed in Australia to address the concerning rise in late diagnosis of the condition. I am joining the board of Healthy Hips Australia to assist their efforts in this area".

MEDIA CONTACT

For further information and interview opportunities with Sarah Twomey, Nicole Williams, Bruce Foster and parents of children affected by DDH, please contact Sarah:

info@healthyhipsaustralia.org.au

FURTHER INFORMATION

Research Article:

https://www.mja.com.au/system/files/issues/204_06/10.5694mja15.01082.pdf

Healthy Hips Week 10-16 April:

<http://www.healthyhipsaustralia.org.au/healthy-hips-week/>

Hip dysplasia awareness flyer:

http://www.healthyhipsaustralia.org.au/pdf/HHA_hipdysplasia_awareness_flyer.pdf

Safe swaddling guidelines:

<http://www.healthyhipsaustralia.org.au/safe-swaddling-guidelines/>

Hip dysplasia stories:

<http://www.healthyhipsaustralia.org.au/category/stories-of-others/>