Breakthrough Study From OIC Finds Increase in Relapse Rate After Clubfoot Treatment

A new study conducted at OIC has revealed important new evidence concerning the treatment of clubfoot, a congenital deformity of one or both feet that occurs in one out of every 1,000 births each year.

As published in the May 2019 issue of “The Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery,” the study shows that for patients whose clubfeet were initially corrected using the Ponseti method—the preferred technique to manage clubfoot deformity—the rate of relapse and the percentage of feet requiring a joint-sparing surgical procedure increased with time. As a result, clinicians who manage clubfoot deformity need to be aware of the possibility of relapse during middle and late childhood, and, thus, follow-up with these patients beyond age 7 years or perhaps until skeletal maturity may be warranted.

“We conducted this study so that clinicians could accurately counsel families whose infants are beginning deformity correction using the Ponseti method,” said lead researcher Hannah M. Thomas. “We now know that relapses may occur up to and beyond 7 years of age, so parents should be aware of the possibility of relapse during late childhood. Repeat cast treatment alone or followed by a joint-sparing surgical procedure is the preferred method for managing a relapsed deformity in an older child.”

The study—performed through a comprehensive literature search—was conducted at the J. Vernon Luck, Sr., M.D., Orthopaedic Research Center on the downtown campus of OIC. In addition to Thomas, researchers included OIC faculty members Sophia N. Sangiorgio, Ph.D.; Edward Ebramzadeh, Ph.D.; and Lewis E. Zionts, M.D. The research center, known as JVL, is internationally recognized for advances in implant performance, including wear, fixation, retrieval analysis and clinical outcome as well as fracture, healing and repair.

OIC is home to a renowned clubfoot clinic whose team of specialty-trained physicians, cast technicians, orthotists and physical therapists work together to ensure that every child is making the right progress to reach that all-important goal: to walk, run and play just like any other child. An IRB-approved database of more than 300 infants treated at OIC has been established and used to study all aspects of clubfoot treatment.
OIC Opens West Coast’s Newest and Most Modern Pediatric Urgent Care Center

OIC’s downtown Los Angeles campus saw the opening last July of the city’s newest and most modern urgent care center for children with musculoskeletal conditions.

The new center is part of OIC’s $23.1 million redesign of its medical pavilion to ensure that OIC’s surgeons, doctors, nurses and staff have the best facilities and equipment to care for the increasing number of children who come through its doors.

“When a child sustains a musculoskeletal injury, prompt medical treatment is important,” said Anthony Scaduto, M.D., CEO of OIC. “Children’s bones grow and heal quickly, but without proper treatment a fractured bone can heal improperly and lead to lifelong problems. The clinical staff at OIC have been specially trained to diagnose and treat even the most acute musculoskeletal injuries in pediatric patients.”

OIC’s Urgent Care Center provides evaluation and on-the-spot treatment by a team of orthopaedic experts—including pediatric orthopaedic physicians, surgeons, nurse practitioners and other clinical staff. The redesigned and greatly expanded center has 18 rooms including private exam rooms, triage rooms and procedure rooms exclusively for pediatric orthopaedics. Also complementing the patient care is a new radiology center featuring the most advanced equipment with three state-of-the-art diagnostic X-ray machines, which offer unparalleled comfort for patients and the highest-quality images for clinicians. There is also a new physical therapy center expressly designed for a child’s comfort with private rooms for highly sensitive kids.

“The new urgent care center will allow us to treat kids more efficiently, reduce pain and suffering, and is part of a redesigned campus that will serve as a model for what pediatric medical care should look like in this early part of the 21st century,” said Dr. Scaduto. “Most important, it has all been carefully designed to greatly enrich the patient experience for both children and their families, while positively affecting quality outcomes.”

OIC Physicians Host Faculty for Renowned Brennemann Lectures

Three members of OIC’s medical staff comprised the faculty that kicked off the 76th annual Brennemann Lectures program last fall in Anaheim. The sessions were part of a three-day educational event sponsored by the Los Angeles Pediatric Society, which drew over 100 pediatricians, family practitioners and nurse practitioners from Southern California.

The lecture series began with OIC’s Joshua Goldman, M.D., addressing “Pediatric Overuse Injuries,” which he has found to be increasingly common and parallels the increase in the intensity of youth sports activities. Dr. Goldman is OIC’s associate director of non-operative sports medicine and has also served as team physician at the United States Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Jennifer Beck, M.D., director of outreach and research at OIC’s Center for Sports Medicine, delivered talks on “What Really is Little League Elbow” and “Overuse Injuries and Risk Factors of Youth Marathon Running.” In addition to her role at OIC, Dr. Beck is assistant clinical professor in the department of orthopaedic surgery at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA.

Rounding out the afternoon session was a lecture on “Commonly Missed Injuries in the Pediatric Population,” conducted by OIC’s Medical Director Mauricio Silva, M.D. During this important session Dr. Silva reviewed the clinical and radiographic characteristics of pediatric injuries and fractures that are commonly missed on initial evaluation.

The Brennemann Lectures are one of the oldest and most established pediatric CME meetings on the west coast and consistently present relevant information in an environment that promotes communication between faculty and attendees. Over the years the lectures have involved countless renowned medical doctors, prominent political leaders and noted entertainment figures.
OIC’s Medical Director Mauricio Silva, M.D., Addresses Hemophilia Conference in Jordan

OIC Medical Director Mauricio Silva, M.D., was one of a select group of trainers invited by the World Federation of Hemophilia to travel to Amman, Jordan, last October to participate in the Federation’s Regional Musculoskeletal Workshop for the Eastern Mediterranean Region. Dr. Silva’s participation in the workshop was part of an ongoing commitment by OIC and its physicians to share their unique expertise with fellow professionals worldwide.

As part of the program, Dr. Silva gave four clinical presentations to the attendees, which included 40 orthopaedic surgeons and physical therapists from throughout the region. The participants represented 15 countries encompassing Algeria, Tunisia, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Qatar, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Pakistan, Bahrain, Egypt, United Arab Emirates and Sudan.

In addition to the formal presentations, Dr. Silva also visited Al-Bashir Hospital where he had the opportunity to examine patients and see firsthand the many challenges that are faced by providers around the world who care for patients with hemophilia. "Unlike in the United States, these physicians have only limited access to clotting factors, which makes their job all the more challenging and demanding," said Dr. Silva. "This was an extremely valuable experience and, in many ways, the most impactful part of my visit."

As follow-up to that visit, the head of the orthopaedic program at Al-Bashir Hospital visited OIC’s Hemophilia Treatment Center, which is an international training center for the World Federation of Hemophilia. During his month-long visit, he spent time not only with Dr. Silva but with the entire hemophilia team at OIC, which is renowned nationwide for their work and research in the field.

In addition to serving as medical director at OIC, Dr. Silva is also clinical professor at the UCLA/Orthopaedic Institute for Children department of orthopaedic surgery at UCLA’s David Geffen School of Medicine. An orthopaedic surgeon specializing in hemophilia disorders, children’s orthopaedics and joint reconstruction, Dr. Silva sits on the musculoskeletal committee of the World Federation of Hemophilia.
Jennifer J. Beck, M.D., director of outreach and research at OIC’s Center for Sports Medicine, was named one of three 2019 Traveling Fellows by the Pediatric Orthopaedic Society of North America (POSNA) and the Asia Pacific Pediatric Orthopaedic Society (APPOS).

POSNA is a not-for-profit professional organization dedicated to advancing musculoskeletal care for children and adolescents through education, research, quality, safety and value initiatives, advocacy, and global outreach to children in underserved areas.

Through this fellowship, Dr. Beck traveled to Asia last spring visiting hospitals in Singapore, Malaysia and South Korea and culminating with attending the Asia Pacific Spine Society/ APPOS meeting. During her trip Dr. Beck collaborated with local hosts in sharing ideas regarding best practices in caregiving and also presented academic lectures to physicians from the host countries on the topics of “Mentoring in Orthopedic Surgery,” “Pain Management and Opioid Use in Pediatric Orthopaedic Surgery,” “Youth Marathon Running: Is it Safe?” and “Return to Sport Testing After Pediatric ACL Reconstruction.”

“It was an incredible experience to exchange ideas and learn new techniques from my colleagues in Asia about how to best care for children with musculoskeletal conditions,” said Dr. Beck. “At the same time I enjoyed sharing what we’ve learned through the years at OIC regarding best practices that can be implemented by others so that children everywhere can grow well and play well.”

In addition to her role as associate director of the Center for Sports Medicine at OIC, Dr. Beck also serves as assistant clinical professor of the UCLA/Orthopaedic Institute for Children Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, David Geffen School of Medicine at the University of California Los Angeles.

Rachel Thompson, M.D., Visits Colombia to Treat Children

As part of its commitment to advancing pediatric orthopaedics worldwide, OIC’s Rachel Thompson, M.D., traveled to Colombia last spring with an orthopaedic team from the Silver Service Children’s Foundation.

Dr. Thompson is director of the UCLA/OIC Center for Cerebral Palsy, the only interdisciplinary clinic in Southern California that evaluates and treats people with cerebral palsy throughout their lifespan and is also heavily involved in research in the field.

The Silver Service Children’s Foundation is comprised of a group of orthopaedic surgeons, nurses, anesthesiologists and pediatricians who travel to the Colombian city of Buga biannually to evaluate and treat children with orthopaedic diseases. Since the organization’s founding in 1992, it has made more than 50 trips to Buga. “It was truly an honor to have joined this team for the third time,” said Dr. Thompson. “Each trip reminds me why I am a pediatric orthopaedic surgeon—to make kids better.”

During the spring visit, the team evaluated more than 200 children and performed 50 procedures on 36 children. “Many of these procedures gave children who did not have the ability to walk for more than a few steps at a time the ability to run and jump and play,” said Dr. Thompson. “Among those we treated were children with neglected clubfoot, untreated hip dysplasia, rickets deformities and neglected cerebral palsy cases. In one case we constructed an ankle where there was none.”

Dr. Thompson joined OIC in 2017 as part of an expansion of the cerebral palsy program on OIC’s downtown Los Angeles campus to complement its center housed at UCLA in West L.A. In addition to her role as associate director of the center, Dr. Thompson is also an assistant clinical professor-in-residence in the Department of Orthopaedics at UCLA. Her clinical and research interests are in cerebral palsy muscular pathology and in using gait analysis to improve surgical decision-making and clinical outcomes.
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