

# Crawling, Walking and Hip Disorders

By Amy Bentley



**Dr. Carl R. Weinert**  
CHOC Orthopaedic  
Surgeon

Dr. Weinert is the Director of the clubfoot and musculoskeletal tumor programs in the Orthopaedic Institute at CHOC Children's. As a clinical professor of orthopaedic surgery at UC Irvine, Dr. Weinert has trained hundreds of orthopaedic and pediatric residents, medical students, nurses, physical therapists and pre-med college students. He completed his internship at Mercy Hospital in Pittsburgh and a fellowship in orthopaedic research at the University of Pittsburgh. His clinical and research interests include bone cysts and benign tumors, clubfoot and hip reconstruction.

Dr. Weinert's philosophy of care: "When a child develops an orthopaedic problem, it can be just as scary for the parents as it is for the child. I treat the entire family with the greatest compassion and understanding."

#### EDUCATION:

University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, Pennsylvania

#### BOARD CERTIFICATIONS:

Orthopaedic Surgery

**1 in 1,000**

THE NUMBER OF BABIES BORN WITH CLUBFOOT IN THE U.S. EACH YEAR

**200,000+**

ANNUALLY, THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND TEENS TREATED FOR PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT-RELATED INJURIES



## HIP DYSPLASIA IN BABIES

"Hip dysplasia occurs when the ligaments that normally hold the ball of the hip into the cup are abnormally loose or relaxed so the hip slips out of place. It's harder to diagnose in babies because it causes no discomfort and there aren't any outward signs," says Dr. Carl Weinert.

"Treatment includes applying a harness that holds the hip into position. The baby wears it for two months full time and two months part time. The ligaments get tighter and the hip stays in place. If we treat this in a newborn, the harness treatment works most of the time."

## DELAYED HIP TREATMENT

A pediatrician often may diagnose hip dysplasia in an infant and refer the baby for orthopaedic treatment, says Dr. Weinert. If it's not found in infancy, older babies may require surgery and a body cast for four months, he says. "An untreated child with hip dysplasia," says Dr. Weinert, "will walk independently, usually by 14 months. So, delayed walking won't necessarily be the clue that the child has this."

## TREAT CLUBFOOT EARLY

"With clubfoot, the foot is turned downward and inward. It's obviously visible when the baby is born so diagnosis is easy. The earlier the treatment is started, the more successful it is and the easier it is," Dr. Weinert says. "We prefer to see newborns within a week. The typical



treatment is the baby gets a cast on his leg from his toes to above the knee. Each time the cast is changed—about once per week for six to eight weeks—the foot is manipulated slightly each time. Eventually, the foot's final position is as upward and outward as a normal foot will go. Sometimes a minor surgery to lengthen a tendon is done during the casting procedure. After the last cast is removed, the child wears special shoes attached to a bar. The success rate of that treatment is about 90 percent."

### WHAT IS ORTHOPAEDICS?

Orthopaedics is the field of medicine that diagnoses and treats conditions of the musculoskeletal system, including bones, joints, muscles, tendons and ligaments. In babies and children, orthopaedic specialists commonly treat bone fractures, birth defects that affect the development of bones and joints, and spinal deformities like scoliosis. Often, neurological diseases such as cerebral palsy cause bone or joint deformities that require orthopaedic treatment.

**1 in 1,000**

THE NUMBER OF BABIES BORN WITH HIP DYSPLASIA IN THE U.S. EACH YEAR



## Keeping Your Athlete in Top Shape

When it comes to sports-related injuries, the experts at the CHOC Children's Orthopaedic Institute know that children aren't just small adults. Special training and experience in pediatric sports medicine allow our specialists to appropriately treat the medical needs unique to children and teens. Our specialists work one-on-one with each patient to develop an individualized diagnosis and treatment plan—with an emphasis on preserving future growth and function, and a safe return to play.

**Find out more at**  
[www.choc.org/sports](http://www.choc.org/sports)

