

Hear the latest on diagnosis, management of head shape anomalies

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Editor's note: *The 2018 AAP National Conference & Exhibition will take place from Nov. 2-6 in Orlando.*

Lance Governale, M.D., FAANS, FAAP, and Jessica A. Ching, M.D., will present “The Misshapen Head: Craniosynostosis vs. Positional Plagiocephaly (S2040)” from 8:30-10 a.m. Sunday, Nov. 4, in room W311EF of the convention center.

Dr. Governale is chief of pediatric neurosurgery and L.D. Hupp associate professor of neurosurgery and pediatrics at University of Florida, Gainesville, and a member of the AAP Section on Neurological Surgery. Dr. Ching is assistant professor of plastic and reconstructive surgery, Department of Surgery, University of Florida, Gainesville.

In the following Q&A, Dr. Governale discusses what they plan to cover and why pediatricians should attend the session.

Q: What are the key things you will be covering?

A: Head shape anomalies, including benign positional plagiocephaly and craniosynostosis, are commonly encountered in general pediatric practice. In this session, we will review the bedside diagnosis of these conditions and identify the few instances where imaging is required. Updates on the very different management of these two conditions will be provided as will the critical ages for referral of these patients to obtain optimal correction of their cranial deformity. The discussion will include new low-dose imaging techniques as well as minimally invasive surgical options.

Q: Why is this is an important topic for pediatricians to learn more about?

A: It is vital for pediatricians to be able to recognize possible craniosynostosis at the bedside as early identification allows minimally invasive surgical options for correction. In addition, the radiation exposure associated with imaging may be minimized as may the parental anxiety regarding benign positional plagiocephaly.

Q: What is the take-home message of the session?

A: Identify craniosynostosis on exam and refer early for potential minimally invasive treatment. Work with the parents of children with benign positional plagiocephaly to tailor an optimal treatment strategy.

Q: Is there anything else you would like to add?

A: Craniofacial issues are best managed at a center that offers a comprehensive team of pediatric providers, including neurosurgery, plastic surgery, oral and maxillofacial surgery, otolaryngology, speech therapy, psychology, social work and related fields.

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