

Children's Orthopaedic surgery has many benefits but there is no certain way to predict the outcome of surgery or treatment. The following are some of the recognised complications and risks of any Orthopaedic treatment. There may be others but they are very rare.

YOUR CONSULTANT WILL INFORM YOU OF ANY ALTERNATIVE TREATMENT METHODS FOR YOUR CHILD INCLUDING DOING NO TREATMENT AT ALL.

YOUR CONSULTANT WILL ALSO EXPLAIN TO YOU THAT YOUR CHILD'S TREATMENT MAY NOT IMPROVE THEIR CONDITION AND THEY MAY BE WORSE AFTER TREATMENT.

Your Consultant will use this 'Information Leaflet' when explaining your child's surgery & obtaining consent for his/her treatment.

#### Complications related to bone

- **Incomplete Osteotomy** - When the bone at the site of correction/surgery is not completely broken during surgery
- **Premature Consolidation** - When the bone heals too early
- **Delayed Consolidation or Non-Union** - Bone healing is delayed or does not occur
- **Axial Deviation; Angulation or Translation** - The limb does not heal in the planned alignment
- **Fracture** - Broken bone
- **Osteomyelitis** - Infection of the bone
- **Septic Arthritis** - Infection in the joint
- **Avascular Necrosis** - Bone death due to lack of blood supply
- **Growth Plate Damage** - Causing interrupted growth of bone resulting in limb length discrepancy or alignment deformity
- **Over lengthening or under lengthening**

#### Complications related to muscles & joints

- **Muscle Cramps**
- **Loss of joint range of movement** – joint stiffness
- **Contracture of a joint** – the joint cannot be straightened
- **Subluxation of a joint** – partial dislocation
- **Dislocation of a joint**

#### Complications related to nerves

- **Pain**
- **Nerve Injury** - A temporary or permanent loss of sensation/power in a limb
- **Cord Injury (Paresis or Paraplegia)** - A temporary or permanent loss of use of a limb
- **Chronic Regional Pain Syndrome** – An unpredictable localised long term pain problem

#### Complications related to blood vessels

- **Bleeding**
- **Compartment Syndrome** - high fluid pressure in muscle compartment
- **Aneurysm** - a localised widening & weakening of a blood vessel, which may burst
- **Malignant Hypertension** - extremely high blood pressure
- **Deep Vein Thrombosis or Pulmonary Embolus** - blood clot in a limb or chest

#### Complications related to external fixator screw or wire sites

- **Pain**
- **Skin Tethering** - the skin can grow up a wire or screw
- **Loosening**
- **Infection**

#### Complications related to surgical wounds

- **Pain**
- **Haematoma** - a severe bruise
- **Dehiscence** - wound breakdown
- **Infection**

#### Complications related to long term treatments

- **Crisis during or after treatment** - psychological problems
- **Weight loss or gain**
- **Withdrawal**
- **Depression**
- **Regression**
- **Effect on the whole family**

#### External fixator (hardware) problems

- **Wire or screw breakages**
- **Hardware breakages (hinges or struts etc.)**
- **Loss of stability**
- **Confusion about correction or 'dynamising' regimes during limb reconstruction programmes** - these are usually remedied very easily

#### Complications caused by the patient's lifestyle

- **Poor cooperation with the treatment programme**
- **Poor weight-bearing, when advised**
- **Poor exercising, when advised**
- **Smoking or Passive Smoking** - delayed healing, infection
- **Long term non-steroidal pain killers**

#### Complications during actual surgery or after surgery

- **Tourniquet Complications** - nerve and blood vessel injury
- **Catheter Complications (Urinary Infection and/or epididymitis)**
- **Medical Complications; Heart Attack, Stroke, Pneumonia**
- **Medical Complications; Atelectasis** - part of the lung may collapse

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## COMPLICATIONS AND RISKS OF ORTHOPAEDIC AND LIMB RECONSTRUCTION TREATMENTS

### For further advice contact:

**Main hospital number: 0114 271 7000**

Patient Advice & Liaison Team (PALS)

The Children's Hospital

Western Bank

Sheffield

S10 2TH

PALS office: 0114 271 7594

[www.sheffieldchildrens.nhs.uk](http://www.sheffieldchildrens.nhs.uk)

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Our young patients are at the centre of everything we do and all our work is focused on providing them with the best facilities, equipment and experience possible, helping to provide a world-class facility that is positioned at the very forefront of paediatric care.

The  
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