

# Child abuse - I

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# Objectives

Should be able to

- Name various forms of child abuse
- Define physical and sexual child abuse.
- List the circumstances of child abuse
- Distinguish a case of child abuse based on clinical features.
- Predict a case of child abuse based on its presentation.
- Identify common conditions mimicking child abuse.
- Explain how to investigate a case of child abuse



# What is child abuse?

- A child is said to be abused if he or she is treated in a manner that is unacceptable in a given culture at a given time
  - Meadow R, Epidemiology, in ABC of Child Abuse 3<sup>rd</sup> edi pp 1-4
- Child abuse syndrome exists when an infant or child suffers repetitive physical injuries inflicted by a parent or guardian in circumstances that exclude accident.
  - Bernard Knight, Pekka Saukko, Fatal Child abuse in Knight's Forensic Pathology, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edi, pp 461-479



# What is child abuse?

- Child abuse or maltreatment constitutes all forms of physical and or emotional ill treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival development or dignity in the context of relationship of responsibility trust of power
  - WHO Handbook for medical officers 1999



# Types of child abuse

- Physical
- Sexual abuse
- Child labour
- Neglect
- Emotional abuse



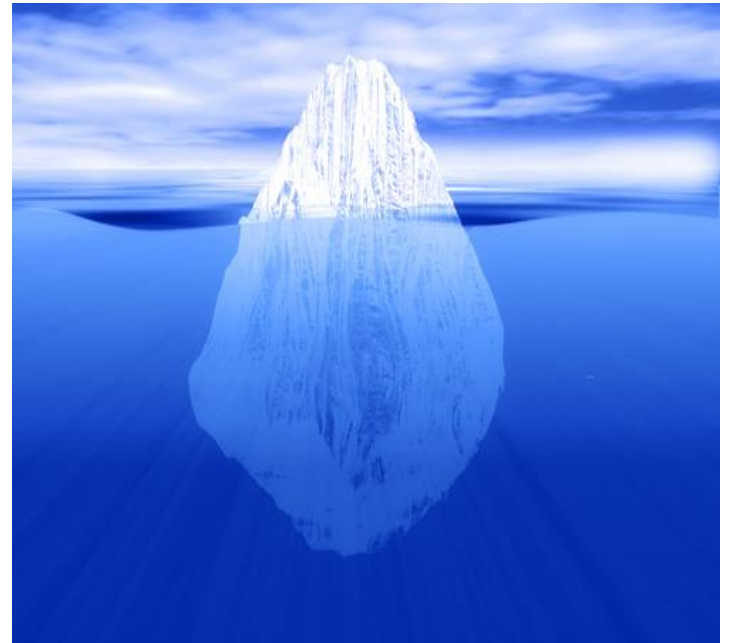
## Types of child abuse cont..

- Exploitation [use of child's activities on the benefit of the others]
- Conscription of children in armed conflict
- Munchausen's syndrome by proxy
- Intentional poisoning



# Iceberg phenomenon of child abuse

- Endemic for generations
- Hidden - small percentage is apparent
- “seen” by the society are the complaints and detections by concerned adults.
- Apparent abuse cases - would be denied



# Physical child abuse

- Deliberate infliction of physical injuries by parent, guardian or caretaker.
- Usually short term and violent and may be repetitive.





# Circumstances

- Under 3 years of age
- Disputed paternity
- Unwanted children
- Adopted children
- Alcoholics or drug addicts
- Immature parents
- Children with learning difficulties/hyper active
- Parents themselves been abused in their childhood
- Domestic servants



# Abusers

- Parents
- Guardian
- Consorts of either spouse
- Baby sitter
- Care takers



# Suspicion and the confirmation based on

- Delayed presentation
- Untreated injuries
- History- inconsistent
- Demeanour of the child
- Injuries that are typical





Typical bruise left by gag



Blistering and edema in acute binding injury

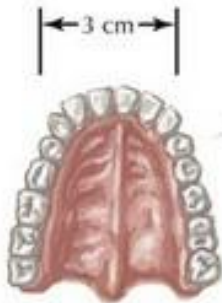


Pigment changes in chronic binding injury

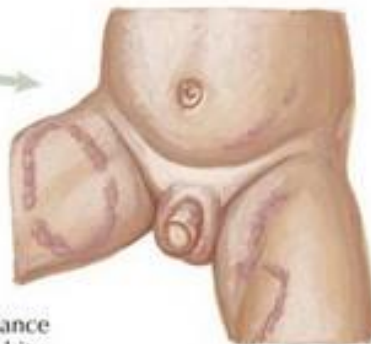
JOHN A. CRAIG MD



Typical slap pattern



Bite pattern. 3 cm or greater distance between canines indicates adult bite



Loop or cord marks on buttocks



# Classic sites of injuries

- Ears (specially pinch marks)
- Black eyes
- Intra oral injuries
- Inner aspects of arms
- Defense injuries in forearms



## Ear and cheek



**Slap marks**



**Pinch marks**



# Black eye



# Black eye





# Intra oral injuries

## Upper lip contusions

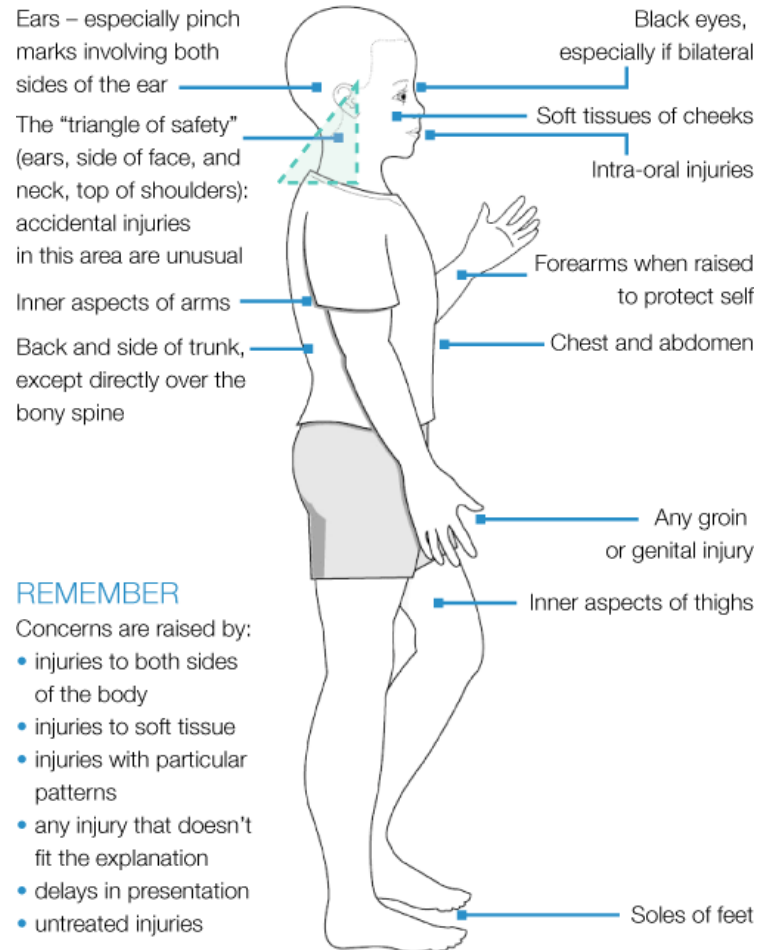
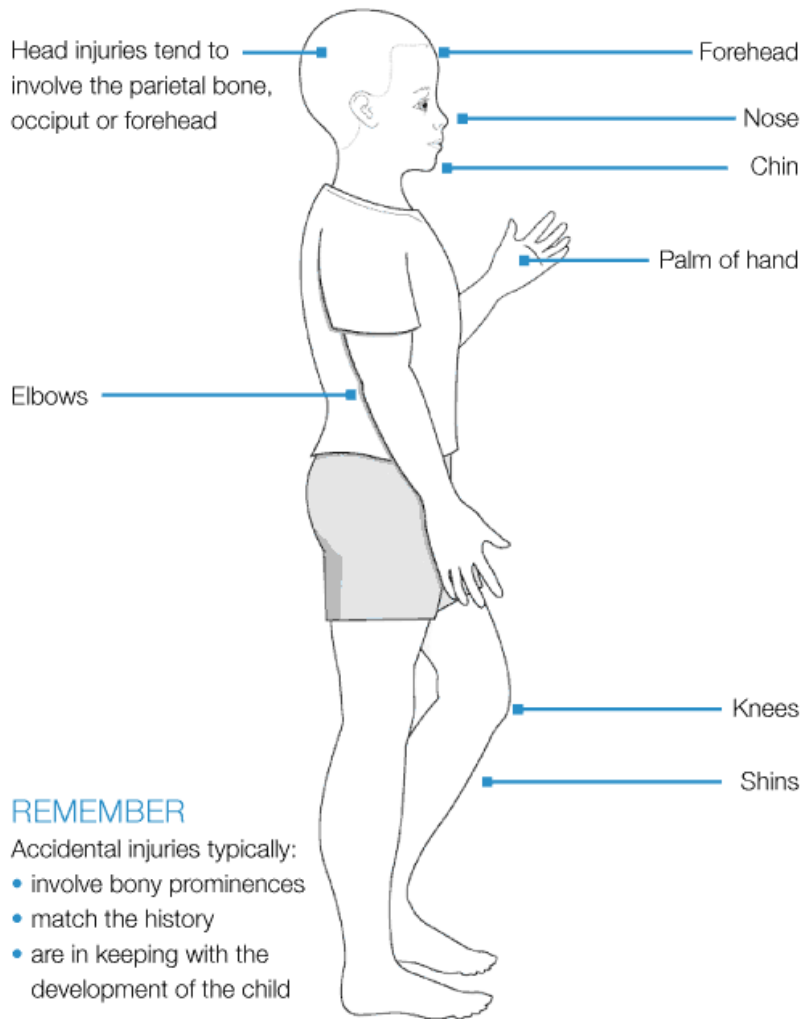


# Intra oral injuries



# Inner aspect of arms





# Injuries involving triangle of safety



- Triangle of safety (ears, sides of face, neck and top of shoulders)

## Classic sites of injuries cont..

- Chest and abdomen
- Back and sides of trunk (except bony prominences)
- Groin and genital injuries
- Inner aspects of thighs
- Soles of foot





# Abdominal injuries



Giardino, Angelo P. "Physical Child Abuse Workup." Physical Child Abuse Workup. Emedicine.com. Web. 26 Feb. 2015. <<http://emedicine.medscape.com/article/915664-workup#a0720>>.



# Chest injuries



Eddie, 16, who ran away from home at age 11 and was physically abused when he worked as a factory labourer in Manila.





# Injuries to the back



# Classical injuries

## Bruising in a young baby

- Commonly small discoid bruises –finger pressure
- Larger bruises - slapping or punching
- Pattern injuries
  - Tramline contusions
  - Nail marks
  - Grip marks
  - Pinch marks
- Age may be incompatible
- Different ages of healing (recurrent episodes)



# Different healing stages



**Tramline contusions**



**Pinching**



**Pinching**

# Multiple injuries



# Common sites of bruising

- Specially wrists and forearms, upper arms, thighs, ankles in small infants (related to rough handling)
- Buttocks –hand smacks /beating with straps
- Thighs-
  - Inner side sexual abuse,
  - Outer side –slaps
- Chest, abdomen and neck- from finger pressure
- Face- cheeks and mouth from slaps





# Various injuries



**Handprint Injury**



**Lashing**

**Looped Cord Injury**





# Bruises

## Bruising in buttocks



## Fingertip bruising and lashing

### Case 4: Finger tip bruising

This 2 year old boy was admitted with a fractured tibia, bruising to the face, and classic finger tip bruising over the right scapula.



### Case 5: Lash marks

This 10 year old girl was whipped with a belt by her depressed father. The linear nature of the marks is seen, together with a tramlining effect, in which the point of impact is white and the adjoining skin shows bruising caused by capillaries that have been broken by blood being forced into them.



# Multiple injuries



# Burns

- Can be moist scolds, dry burns, or electrical
- Dry burns are multiple cigarette/firebrand related
- Scolds are from dipping in hot fluids or deliberate pouring or deliberate feeding of hot liquids
- Need to exclude accidental dripping and dermatological conditions

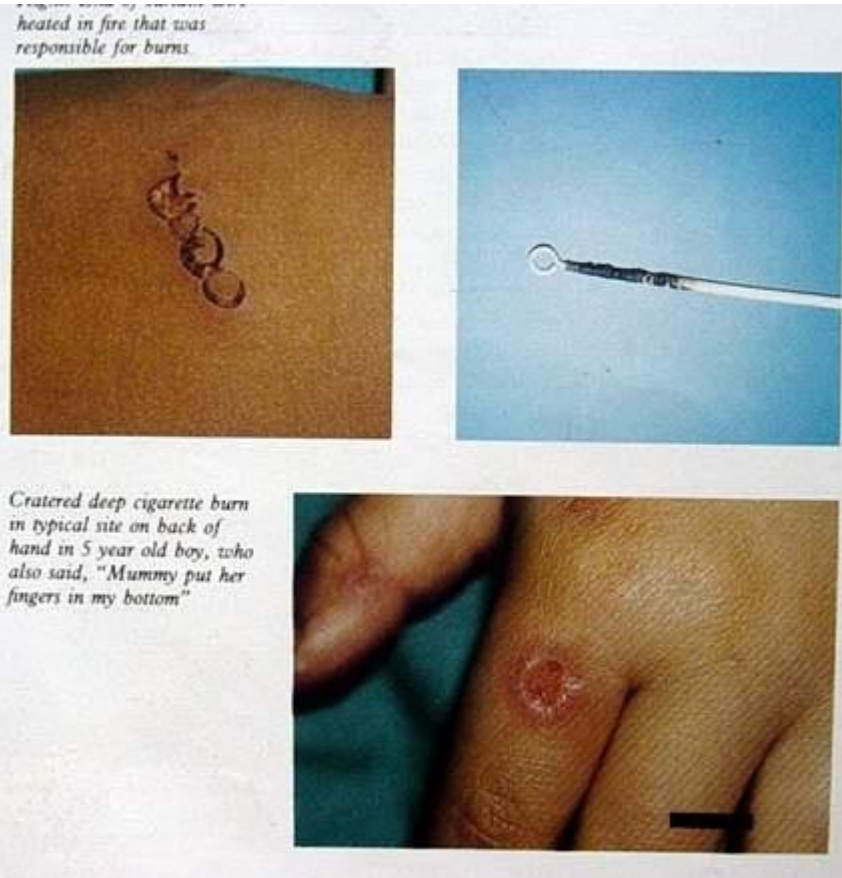


Steam Iron Injury





# Burns from heated objects



# Cigarette burns



**Figure 2:** Cigarette burns on the dorsum on the left hand of a girl aged 8 years and 4 months



# Moist burns



# Injury pattern in immersion

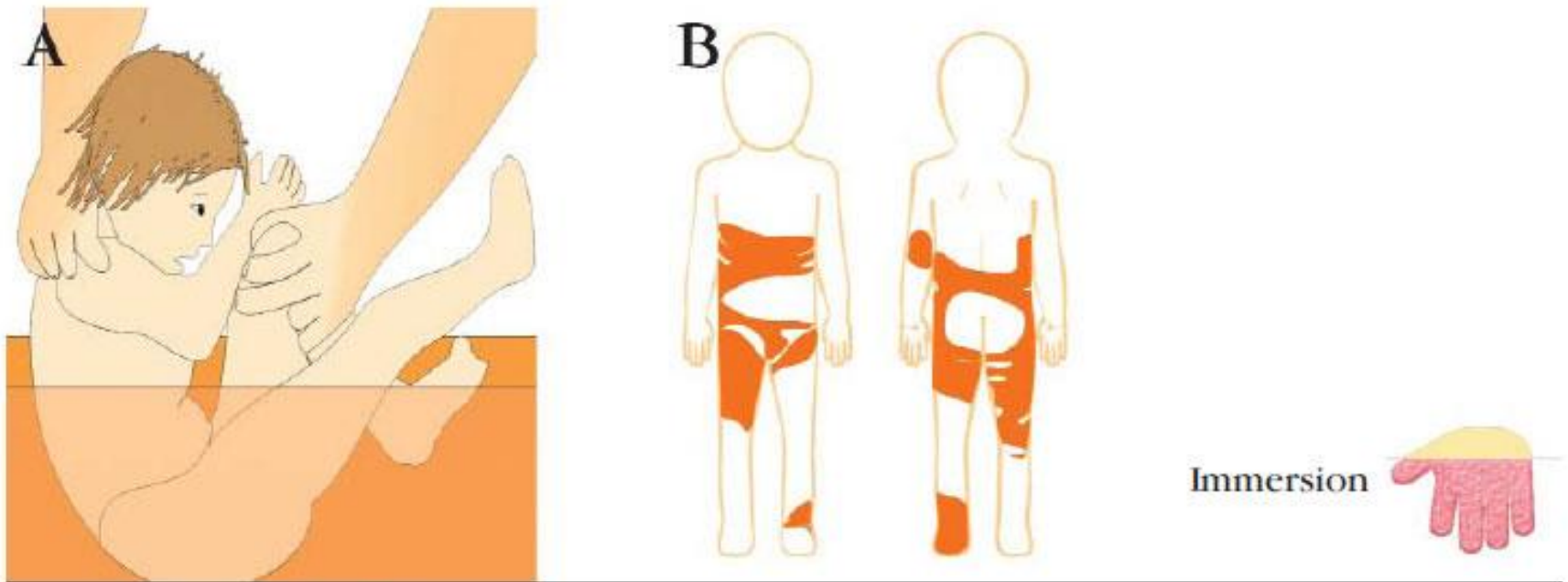


FIGURE 2: A. Scald; B. "Zebra striae" with preservation of the gluteal region (resting point) and C. "glove" burn  
*Adapted source: Kos L, Shwayder T<sup>n</sup>*

# Bite marks

- Usually associated with sexual offences
- May see anywhere on child's body
- In older children possibility of self biting





# Bite marks



# Bite marks



# Summary

- Child abuse constitute any form of maltreatment or neglect caused by care givers resulting in actual or potential harm to the child.
- Only a small percentage of existing child abuse is apparent in the society.
- Delayed presentation, multiple injuries of different stages of healing arouse suspicion of child abuse.
- Before confirming a case as child abuse natural and accidental conditions mimicking abuse has to be excluded.





**THANK YOU!**

