



CHILDREN'S HEALTH TALK



MIAMI CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL®

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We're here for the children

A Miami Children's Hospital Community Update

June 2008

NEW 'TURBO' LIMB-LENGTHENING TECHNIQUE HELPS JALEN MOVE AHEAD

Jalen Wring, age 7, longed for shoes like his classmates wore -- athletic shoes that would help him run faster and jump higher.

Jalen was born with a congenital short femur. His right leg was 3.2 centimeters shorter than his left, making it necessary for him to wear special orthopaedic lift shoes to compensate. Going barefoot was out of the question. The limb discrepancy caused Jalen great pain in his back when he tried to walk without shoes.

Crystal Holloway, Jalen's mother, was worried. She wanted a normal life for her lively first grader and was concerned that his medical care was going nowhere. A web search led the Delray Beach mother of four to Dr. Christopher Iobst, an orthopaedic surgeon at Miami Children's Hospital and one of the nation's foremost experts on treating children with limb discrepancies.

"I knew right away that he was someone I could trust to operate on my child," said Ms. Holloway. He explained everything so well and has such a great bedside manner. He is an awesome doctor."

Dr. Iobst is a regional expert in the use of a treatment method that involves surgically cutting the shorter bone and attaching an adjustable frame to the child's limb. Gradually over the course of up to six months or more, the frame is expanded, separating the ends of the bone in tiny increments. New bone tissue grows to fill in the space between until the shorter limb has reached the appropriate length.

Jalen was especially lucky. He was the first patient regionally to benefit from a new "turbo" limb lengthening procedure that reduced the length of time he wore the frame to only six weeks. Dr. Iobst participated in initial research nationally that led to the development of the new enhanced method. A plate is implanted along the bone to be lengthened at the same



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— Crystal Holloway, Jalen Wring's Mother

time that the frame is attached. This plate reinforces the affected bone once the appropriate length has been achieved, making it possible for the frame to be removed much earlier, before the bone has healed completely. Later, once the bone has achieved the desired density, the plate is removed.

Today, Jalen is leading an active life, playing hard during recess at school and riding his bike daily to further strengthen his leg. "You should have seen him when he got his first pair of Air Jordan's (athletic shoes)," said Ms. Holloway. "He was so excited to have shoes like the other children wear and he's able to run and play so much better now. We are so fortunate that we found Dr. Iobst."

Jalen Wring was the first patient regionally to benefit from a new "turbo" limb lengthening procedure. For more information, please call the MCH Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at 305-662-8366.



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