

CT head for Infants Presenting without signs of Head Injury in Safeguarding Investigation .

Authors

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Background

In 2021 two studies were published showing low yield for occult head injury in cases of physical abuse under one year with no signs of head injury.

A new guidance was produced by HIPPS to reduce the numbers of CT scans in infants under 1y presenting with suspected physical abuse.

Aim

To repeat previous study at UHS now that new guidance is in place and see if there has been any change in practice.

Method

Retrospective review of case note of infants presenting under 1 year of age with signs of physical abuse. February 2022-February 2023

Learning to Share

Correlation with history is important in order not to miss any occult intracranial injury
It is unlikely there will be occult injury in a case where there are no head injury signs or suggestive history.

Results

20 Cases were reviewed.

- All 20 had CT scans and skeletal surveys.
 - 9 had no head injury signs
 - 8 had normal CT scan and 1 had occult head injury. This case was a five week old baby with facial bruise and history of a fall.
 - 11 had evidence of head injury
 - 6 showed intracranial effects.

Conclusions

- The results are consistent with the previous study despite the one case of occult injury as the history taken indicated the need for a CT scan.
- This demonstrates the importance of history when deciding to do a CT scan safeguarding cases with no signs of head injury.
- Further studies may be needed to confirm the evidence of low possibility of occult head injury in cases where there are no clear signs or history of head injury