Ultrasound can reliably diagnose hip dysplasia at age 6 months

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Developmental dislocation (dysplasia) of the hip (DDH) is a common congenital condition in which a child's upper thighbone is dislocated from the hip socket. The condition can be present at birth or develop during a child's first year of life. Plain radiography (X-rays) has long been the gold standard screening modality for this condition in 6-month-old children, despite concerns over exposing very young children to ionizing radiation.

In new research presented today at the 2012 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS), 35, 5- to 7-month-old children at high risk for DDH were screened with the standard pelvis X-ray, as well as a bilateral non-stress hip ultrasounds. Blinded orthopaedic surgeons then evaluated the X-rays and ultrasounds for standard measure of hip dysplasia. Of the 35 children involved in the study, only one was diagnosed with dysplasia, and the diagnosis was made on both the ultrasound and X-ray.

Ultrasound provided good quality images with 100 percent diagnostic correlation to the X-rays in all patients. Ultrasound is a reliable alternative imaging method to X-rays for DDH screening in 5-to-7 month old children.

Provided by American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons