

A longer look at treatments for leg length discrepancies

October 23 2015

When balancing treatment options for a child with a significant difference in leg length, doctors typically advise families about the risks and benefits of surgeries to either shorten or elongate one of the limbs. New research suggests they may also want to consider how the child's ultimate height will affect his or her income as an adult.

In a study to be presented at the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) National Conference & Exhibition in Washington, DC, on Saturday, Oct. 24, researchers discovered each extra inch of adult height translates to an average increase of more than \$1,100 added annual income.

Eric J. Peng, a medical student at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine, analyzed data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1979 (NLSY79), a longitudinal study that followed a nationally representative sample of 12,686 people who were 14-22 years old when first surveyed in 1979. Surveys were conducted annually from 1979 to 1994, and then every other year from 1994 to 2010.

Peng determined that each extra inch of adult height correlated with an average increase of \$1,193 in yearly income, using 2010 inflation adjusted figures. For men, each extra inch of height from 64" to 70" meant an increase in yearly income of \$1,660, while each extra inch of height from 70" to 76" correlated with an increase in yearly income of \$788. For women, each extra inch of height from 59" to 70" brought with it an increase in yearly income of \$1,186 in 2010 dollars.

This means that the average 70" male earns \$3,321 more per year than the average 68" male. Over the course of 50 years' employment, he would earn \$166,047 more lifetime income, according to the findings.

Children with limb length discrepancy in their legs typically undergo procedures to shorten their longer leg, which reduces their future adult height. Leg lengthening is usually avoided because it involves multiple [surgeries](#) and more potential complications, Peng said.

"But if, as this study suggests, adult height and income are correlated," Mr. Peng said, "limb-lengthening procedures may have some overlooked benefits."

More information: The abstract will be presented at 3:35 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 24 in room 143A at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, DC. To view the abstract, [aap.confex.com/aap/2015/webpro ... nary/Paper31850.html](http://aap.confex.com/aap/2015/webpro...nary/Paper31850.html)

Provided by American Academy of Pediatrics

Citation: A longer look at treatments for leg length discrepancies (2015, October 23) retrieved 26 April 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-10-longer-treatments-leg-length-discrepancies.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--