

Nursemaid's Elbow

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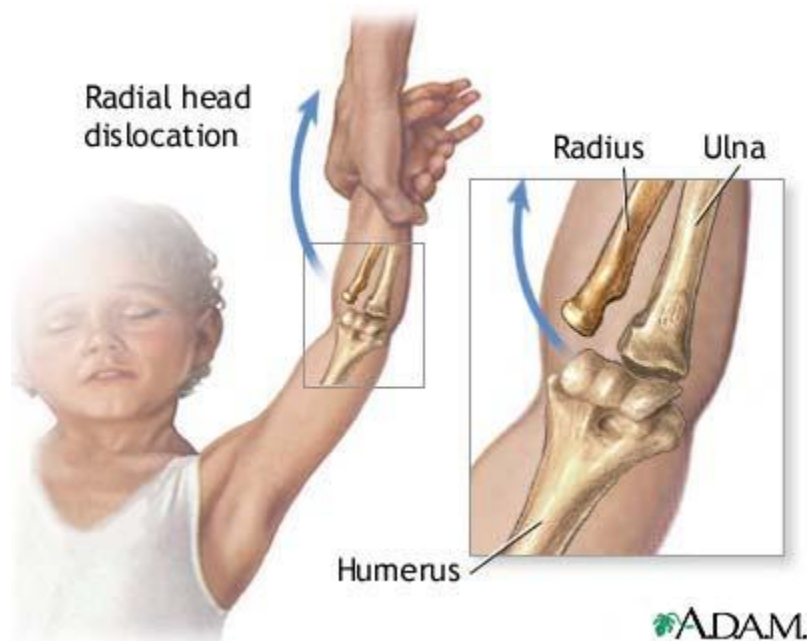
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Nursemaid's elbow is a common injury that is seen most often in children between the ages of 1-3 years old. The child usually has had an incident in which the extended arm was pulled. Most commonly it occurs when a child is falling and the individual holding the hand doesn't let go. Another common reason is when the child is swinging while being held by the hands. Occasionally, the injury occurs after a fall.

Nursemaid's elbow is more common in girls than boys and more often on the left side.

While supporting the radial head, the forearm is supinated or pronated and flexed at the same time. A "click" will be heard or felt. After the "reduction", the child will immediately use the arm. Sometimes a cast is needed for stabilization and to keep the elbow in a neutral position. Follow-up for patients wearing a cast is typically in 3 weeks. For those that do not need a cast, follow-up is unnecessary unless the child doesn't start to use the arm.

There is a relatively high incidence of recurrence. Parents should be made aware of this and the mechanism of injury should be explained. It may be useful to teach the parents how to "reduce" the dislocation at home.



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