Pathological findings and normal variants when examining children with suspected sexual abuse

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Objectives

• Explaining the examination
• How to talk to children
• Review of normal examination findings
• Recognising normal variation
• Review of abnormal genital findings including sexual abuse findings.
Non-acute CSA Examination-explaining the examination

• Lack of understanding of nature of medical amongst many professionals

• Invasive?
• Distressing?
• Abusive?
Non-acute CSA Examination-explaining the examination

• Child Protection Medical Assessment Leaflet
• Handed to parents by social worker prior to medical
• Explains that holistic top to toe medical
• Clearly states not an internal examination
• Child can say stop at any time
Non-acute CSA Examination-explaining the examination

- Normal to be normal
- Child’s history is most important aspect of evaluating possible sexual abuse
- Therapeutic examination for children
• It is clear that in a large number of children who have given clear histories of abuse there may be no abnormal findings on examination of acute or healed trauma.

• This is because the injuries they sustained have healed completely healed by the time they are examined or because the acts of abuse did not cause any physical injury to the child.
References

• Healing of hymenal injuries in prepubertal and adolescent girls: a descriptive study. McCann et al
  Paediatrics 2007

• Healing of nonhymenal injuries in prepubertal and adolescent girls: a descriptive study. McCann et al
  Paediatrics 2007
Talking to children

• How to explain the examination to children
• How to help keep them safe in the future
TALK
PANTS
AND YOU'VE GOT IT COVERED!
LEARN THE UNDERWEAR RULE

TALK PANTS AND YOU’VE GOT IT COVERED!

P - PRIVATES ARE PRIVATE
Part of your body covered by underwear are private. No one should ask to see or touch them. Sometimes doctors, nurses or family members might have to. But they should always explain why, and ask if it’s OK first. No one should ask you to touch or look at parts of your body that are covered by underwear.

A - ALWAYS REMEMBER YOUR BODY BELONGS TO YOU
It’s your body, no one else’s. No one should make you do things that make you feel embarrassed or uncomfortable. If anyone tries, tell an adult you trust.

N - NO MEANS NO
You have the right to say "no" - even to a family member or someone you love. Remember, you’re in control of your body and your feelings are important.

S - SPEAK UP, SOMEONE CAN HELP
Talk about stuff that makes you worried or upset. An adult you trust will listen, and be able to help. It doesn’t have to be a family member. It can be a teacher or a friend’s parent – or even ChildLine.

T - TALK ABOUT SECRETS THAT UPSET YOU
Secrets shouldn’t make you feel upset or worried. If they do, tell an adult you trust. You will never get into trouble for sharing a secret that upsets you.

ChildLine 0800 111111
ChildLine is a service run by the NSPCC. It’s free to call and run for adults and children. NSPCC 0207 189 70 00
Examination Technique
Exam Technique: Supine Frog-Leg Position
Exam Technique: Labial Separation
Exam Technique: Supine Knee-Chest Position
Exam Technique: Prone Knee-Chest Position
Normal Genital Anatomy
Normal Prepubertal Genital Anatomy
Use of Cotton-Tipped Swab
Normal Examination in Prone Knee-Chest Position
Non- traumatic Pathology
• Cases of sexual abuse
• Accidental injuries
References

1. Visual Diagnosis of Child Abuse - American Academy of Paediatrics
2. ‘The Physical Signs of Child Sexual Abuse’ - Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health 2015