

Children are not just small adults



Women & Children's
Hospital of Buffalo
A Kaleida Health Facility



The Department of Pediatric Surgery at Women & Children's Hospital of Buffalo (WCHOB) was established in 1957 and specializes in the surgical care of newborns, children, adolescents and young adults up to the age of 21. As a Level III NYS Designation Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, WCHOB provides on-site access to pediatric surgical specialists for the comprehensive care of neonates, and is the only hospital in Western New York with pediatric surgical sub-specialists for neurosurgery, general surgery, ophthalmology, orthopedics, otolaryngology, dental and urology.

Medical problems of children treated by the pediatric surgical specialists at WCHOB are often quite different from those commonly seen in adults by practitioners at other facilities. Therefore, the hospital's pediatric surgeons use equipment, techniques and facilities specifically designed for children.

"Children are not just small adults," said Kaveh Vali, MD, Attending, Pediatric Surgery at Women & Children's Hospital of Buffalo. "A six-foot, 200 pound adult has a completely different physiology than a 26-inch, 18 pound baby. You can't apply the same tools and techniques to both."

Home to the region's only minimally invasive surgery program for children, WCHOB pediatric surgeons utilize laparoscopic tools, high-definition TV monitors and LED lighting to deliver the highest standard of care and to assure the most optimal outcome for each patient. For treatment of the smallest and youngest patients, WCHOB pediatric surgeons use 3 mm instruments, as opposed to the standard 5-10 mm. While this surgical technology improves visualization and accuracy for surgeons, it also offers a number of benefits to the patient.

"With minimally invasive surgery, small incisions are used to deliver the least amount of impact to a child's body and organs," said Dr. Vali. "Due to this technique, patients experience less pain, shorter recovery time, and better cosmetic appearance at the incision site. In many cases, time in the operating room is also shortened, meaning less time that the child is under anesthesia."

WCHOB pediatric surgeons also have the ability to monitor and prepare for women who may be bearing a high-risk fetus. Through the use of Fetal MRI technology, a diagnostic technique which produces detailed images of a baby while still in the mother's uterus, surgeons are able to identify and evaluate congenital anomalies prior to birth.

"Every embryological anomaly is different," said Dr. Vali. "Fetal MRI imaging provides valuable information about the anatomy of a fetus, which allows us time to strategize and plan for the most effective surgical treatment once the baby is born."

As the only hospital in Western New York with teams of pediatric surgeons available 24/7, WCHOB is committed to excellence in teaching, cutting-edge research programs and providing the highest quality of care for the surgical needs of our region's children. These efforts make the Department of Pediatric Surgery a nationally and internationally recognized academic unit of WCHOB.