

Hualien

Operating Room with a Human Touch - Pediatric Surgery and Anesthesia Without Tears

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An image showing Dr. Wang Jui-Ting, Attending Physician of the Department of Anesthesiology at Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital, holding a baby who has just had surgery in his arms on the way to the Recovery Room has been circulating on the Internet recently. A nurse holding the intravenous drip is at his side. Dr. Lin Shinn-Zong, Superintendent of the hospital, explains that this is the “Pediatric Surgery and Anesthesia Without Tears” Program which has been implemented for two years with the ultimate goal of creating a world-class, pain-free hospital and injecting human warmth into the cold and sterile operating room and ward environments.

Dr. Wang Jui-Ting states that this program was launched by Dr. Luk Hsiang-Ning, Director of the Department of Anesthesiology, and Dr. Yang Yao-Lin and Dr. Wang Po-Kai, the two Vice Directors of the Department. He shares that it is sometimes difficult to tell for the medical personnel whether babies are in pain or still drowsy from the anesthetic after surgery because they can't express themselves. Before the

adoption of the program, some of them would cry without end in the Recovery Room, which was heartbreaking to the mothers. The scene would turn into a teary mess, but the doctors still had concerns over the administration of pain killers since they couldn't determine whether the baby was fully awake or



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not. The emergence of multimodal pain management technologies in the field of Anesthesiology four to five years ago provided the spark for the “Pediatric Surgery and Anesthesia Without Tears” Program.

Due to the small body size of infants and toddlers, it is almost impossible for medical personnel next to the surgeon to observe these little patients during surgery, but they are often in great pain after waking up from anesthesia. Dr. Wang shares his experience undergoing surgery as a young child. He recalls being terrified because he was surrounded by strangers wearing surgical masks. The team therefore racked their brains to think of what they could do for these little patients.

The “Pediatric Surgery and Anesthesia Without Tears” Program involves the administration of Dormicum, a short-acting sedative, administered in a fruit juice or in liquid form prior to anesthesia. Dr. Wang always tells his little patients that this is “the courage potion for little superheroes that will make you fearless!” After administration of the sedative, the infants become drowsy. Due to the temporary amnesia and anti-anxiety effect of the drug, they are not afraid and won’t cry even if they are surrounded by strangers.

Dr. Wang further points out that multimodal pain management technologies applied after anesthesia

gives doctors a clear grasp of nerve blocking and partial pain-killing effects of numerous local anesthetics injected near pain nerves through ultrasonic guidance in place of syringes. Infants are thereby kept warm during and after surgery and recover well.

After surgery, infants and toddlers can keep sleeping in the Recovery Room until the effect of the anesthetic wears off. Parents can come into the room to accompany and care for their little ones in a worry-free manner. When they wake up, they are no longer surrounded by strangers donning green scrubs and surgical masks but are in the company of their loved ones, which transforms the surgery into a more comfortable and warm experience.

Superintendent Lin states that the original motivation was to transform Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital into a pain-free hospital through interdepartmental cooperation between the Departments of Anesthesiology and Neurosurgery. The goal was to meet or exceed international standards for pain-free hospitals in the fields of acute and chronic disease therapies, OR surgery procedures, or ward treatment. Current achievements of the hospital in this field surpass international standards.

Director Luk adds that “Pediatric Surgery and Anesthesia Without Tears” represents a concerted effort of medical teams all over the world. However,

hospitals that fully embrace this concept are rare in Taiwan. Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital is the first hospital in the Hualien and Taitung area to implement such a seemingly difficult program, which poses a daunting challenge. Fortunately, the Department of Anesthesiology features numerous outstanding young doctors such as Dr. Yang Yao-Lin and Dr. Wang Po-Kai, the two Vice Directors of the Department and Dr. Jui-Ting Wang. Our achievements are a direct result of their passion and dedicated efforts over the past two years.

Director Luk further points out

that the Department of Anesthesiology selects two physicians to attend training programs administered by Mackay Memorial Hospital in Taipei and Chang Gung Children's Hospital in Linkou on an annual basis. The hospital has honed its capabilities to implement a large-scale anesthesia program for children over many years. If Hualien Tzu Chi Medical Center decides to establish a children's hospital in the future, the anesthesiologists of the hospital will be capable of meeting relevant requirements in the field of anesthesiology for children at any time.



Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital, the first hospital in the Hualien and Taitung area to implement a “Pediatric Surgery and Anesthesia Without Tears” Program, is deeply committed to creating a pain-free hospital. The image shows Director Luk Hsiang-Ning (first right), Vice Director Yang Yao-Lin (third right), and Dr. Huang Jing-Xuan (second right) of the Department of Anesthesia performing a simulated intubation with new epidemic prevention technologies. The procedure is monitored by Superintendent Lin Shinn-Zong (first left).