

Gift of Life Partnering with Hammoud Hospital University Medical Center for Surgical Treatments of Congenital Heart Disease in Lebanon

The incidence of congenital heart disease in children is relatively the same in all populations at around 0.8-1%. However, the number of affected children is higher in Lebanon due to the large number of children per family. It is estimated that the number of Lebanese children born with heart disease annually is around six hundred, four hundred of which will need cardiac surgery.

Currently, the diagnosis of congenital heart disease is made before birth in all developed countries. Unfortunately, in Lebanon, less than 1/3 are diagnosed antenatally. The diagnosis is usually made when a child demonstrates symptoms of congenital heart disease such as a bluish complexion (due to lack of oxygen), lack of growth or regular crying. Sometimes, repeated infections are the only clues, and this is an important feature of congenital heart disease (or CHD). CHD must be treated as soon as the diagnosis is made, in order to save the patient. CHD is the leading cause of death in infants before the age of one (more than cancer and starvation). The treatment is very challenging for two reasons:

- Need for highly specialized medical set-up for treatment. Surgical treatment of CHD necessitates the availability of a dedicated hospital unit, a specialized surgeon, anesthesiologist, cardiologist, perfusionist, and nursing staff. Poor surgical results have been linked to poorly prepared and staffed units, whereas excellent results are achieved with dedicated and professional units. Survival rates of 97.5% are achieved with adequate treatment and management.
- Lack of funds. The surgical procedures are very expensive and third party payers do not cover more than 75% of the cost. The rest is paid for by the families and this cost is too high for most to afford especially in Lebanon. Humanitarian associations like Gift of Life are one way of alleviating the financial burden on these families and helping them obtain quick and adequate care for their child.

In Lebanon, CHD surgeries are performed in five major



hospitals only. Hammoud Hospital University Medical Center (HHUMC) has been one of the first hospitals in Lebanon and the region to open a pediatric cardiac surgery program in the year 2001 providing care to Lebanese citizens and servicing the continuous influx of refugees within the country. More than 1,200 babies have been operated so far at HHUMC with excellent results. Since 2013, HHUMC and the American University Medical Center (AUBMC) have collaborated to give children with congenital heart disease an increased chance for survival. These pediatric patients are admitted whenever there is an available intensive care bed, and both teams work together to offer the children pediatric cardiac surgeries and state of the art treatment. This cooperation has allowed both hospitals to help a very large number of Lebanese citizens and Syrian refugees with congenital heart disease. The excellent results of the surgeries has prompted the UNHCR and NGO such as Gift of Life to support the program in both hospitals.

Gift of Life Lebanon, led by Mrs. Lina Shehayeb is a chapter of Gift of Life International (GOLI) the largest worldwide NGO helping children with congenital heart disease in over 78 countries around the world. On May

16, 2017, a memorandum of understanding was officially signed between HHUMC and Gift of Life Lebanon to financially support children with CHD treated in both centers by renowned cardiac surgeon Dr. Issam Al Rassi. With an effort led by Gift of Life Lebanon, Gift of Life International (GOLI) as well Rotary Clubs both around the world and in Lebanon, a global grant was approved and matched by The Rotary Foundation, USA. This grant will increase the number of surgeries to be performed at Hammoud Hospital UMC. This Rotary Global Grant will also include for the first time a Vocational Training and Knowledge Sharing program headed by Dr. Mark Turrentine with a team from The

Riley Hospital for Children in Indiana, USA and by Dr. Issam El Rassi and his team from AUBMC, Lebanon. Both teams will be spending a week at Hammoud Hospital UMC in Saida to share their experience and exchange knowledge regarding state of the art medical practices while performing cardiac surgeries together to save the life of eight children.

Families of patients with Congenital Heart Diseases can contact Hammoud Hospital University Medical s.a.l. Pediatric Cardiac Center at +961-7-720638 or e-mail: cardiac@hammoudhospital.org, Mrs. Nadine Skakini.

Infos

4 Types d'Aliments qui Augmentent Les Douleurs

Certains aliments peuvent abimer nos intestins, provoquant des douleurs ou augmentant une douleur déjà présente, et à long terme, favoriser l'apparition de maladies chroniques.

Les produits à base de blé

Les aliments à base de blé contiennent du gluten, une protéine qui contient elle-même une molécule appelée gliadine alpha qui est très difficile à digérer.

Mal digérées, ces molécules favorisent la multiplication des bactéries pathogènes avec comme conséquence le déséquilibre de la flore intestinale et une augmentation de la perméabilité des intestins, ce qui favorise le développement d'inflammations et donc de douleurs (maux de ventre, ballonnements...) ou de maladies chroniques telle que l'arthrose.

Que faire ? Si on en mange dans des quantités raisonnables, pas de problème. En revanche, une fois la maladie déclarée, il convient de suivre un régime hypotoxique afin de faire disparaître les douleurs.

Les produits laitiers

Le yaourt, le beurre, la crème fraîche et les autres produits provenant du lait de vache peuvent augmenter les douleurs en raison de leur teneur en caséines.

La caséine, comme le gluten, est à l'origine de nombreuses intolérances et se digère difficilement. Cette protéine peut être à l'origine d'inflammation et d'hyperperméabilité de l'intestin. L'hyperperméabilité permet la pénétration dans la circulation sanguine des substances nocives qui devraient être éliminées dans les selles. L'inflammation peut être immédiatement douloureuse ou se déclarer au bout de plusieurs années sous

forme de maladie inflammatoire chronique.

Viandes cuites

La cuisson des viandes à partir de 110° favorise la production de glycotoxines, les acrylamides. C'est ce qu'on appelle la réaction de Maillard.

Sur le long terme, la cuisson à haute température des protéines d'origine animale peut provoquer l'apparition de maladies inflammatoires chroniques.

Mais sur le court terme, ces molécules difficiles à digérer peuvent provoquer un déséquilibre du microbiote intestinal, la dysbiose, qui se traduit par une inflammation puis par une hyperperméabilité de l'intestin.

Il convient de consommer ces aliments avec modération. Mais une fois la maladie ou les douleurs installées, mieux vaut suivre le régime hypotoxique afin de faire disparaître les douleurs.

Les plats préparés

Les plats préparés et transformés par l'industrie alimentaire contiennent des quantités importantes de sucre, de sel et de gras, mais surtout de nombreux additifs alimentaires (colorants, émulsifiants, conservateurs...).

Une alimentation riche en ce type de produits pourrait causer de la dysbiose, responsable de maux de ventre, de ballonnements et de constipation mais aussi, sur le long terme, de maladies chroniques.

Les additifs alimentaires stimulent les récepteurs de la douleur et peuvent l'augmenter chez les personnes qui souffrent de douleurs chroniques.