

Pectus Excavatum - Mild

Definition

- Pectus Excavatum is a birth defect of the chest. The breastbone (sternum) and ribs grow inward.
- Pectus Excavatum makes the center of the chest look sunken.
- About 1 in 400 children are born with pectus.
- This medical diagnosis was made by a doctor after seeing your child.

Health Information

Symptoms

- The center of the chest looks sunken in.
- Most pectus is mild and does not cause any symptoms.
- Severe pectus can cause trouble breathing. Less than 1% of all children with pectus have a severe form.
- Your child's pectus is mild, so he should not have these symptoms.

Cause

- Children are born with pectus.
- Pectus is caused by abnormal growth between the ribs and breastbone.
- Pectus can run in families.
- Pectus is 3 times more common in boys.
- Pectus becomes more prominent during puberty.

Medical Diagnosis: How It is Made

- The diagnosis of pectus should only be made by a doctor.
- It's based on a complete medical history and physical exam.
- Your doctor may also do some tests to check for other causes.

Care Advice

1. Key Points

- Pectus is a birth defect of the chest wall. It makes the center of the chest look sunken
- Most people with pectus do not need any treatment.
- Here is some home care advice that should help.

2. No Activity Restrictions

- Your child's heart, lungs, bones and muscles work normally.
- Your child can continue to be active and play all sports.
- You do not need to restrict any activities.

3. No Treatment Needed

- Mild pectus does not cause health problems.
- No treatment or medicines are needed.

4. **Support Your Child**

- Some children with pectus may feel self-conscious about the way their chest looks. They may even be teased.
- Remind your child their chest just looks different, but it's still healthy.
- It's important to be able to talk openly about any differences in one's body. Help your child decide what they will tell your friends. Example: "My chest is shaped differently than yours. That's the way I was born. It's normal. It doesn't hurt or anything."

5. **What to Expect**

- Mild pectus does not affect the function of the heart or lungs.
- Mild pectus does not need treatment.
- Pectus stops changing when puberty is done.

Call Your Doctor If

- You think your child needs to be seen
- You have other questions or concerns

Pediatric Care Advice

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