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Fetal Deformities: Cleft Lip and Cleft Lip (Cleft Lip) in Newborns in the City of Basra

Anwar N. Seiwan
Department of Biology, College of Science, Basrah University

Abstract: Cleft lip, also known as a harelip, is a congenital deformity affecting children. It results from improper fusion of tissues during fetal development, leading to a split or openings in the upper lip, the roof of the mouth, or both. There are various types and forms of cleft lip; it may occur on one side of the upper lip or on both sides, and it can be either complete or incomplete.

Several factors contribute to the development of a cleft lip. Genetic or hereditary causes increase the likelihood if there is a family history of the condition. Additionally, certain medications taken by the mother during pregnancy can negatively affect fetal development, leading to cleft lip. These include antiepileptic drugs such as valproate, acne medications like Accutane, and certain heart medications. Substance abuse, including drug use, alcohol consumption, and smoking by the mother, also increases the risk. Exposure to radiation, chemicals, certain viruses, and maternal diabetes are among other contributing factors.

Cleft lip can lead to several complications, such as difficulties with feeding, speech, and hearing. It may also result in ear infections due to fluid leakage during feeding, dental abnormalities, and improper tooth development. The condition can also impact the child's behavior and social adaptation due to psychological effects.

Treatment typically involves surgical repair of the cleft, performed by specialized surgeons who reconstruct the lip using surrounding tissues.

Key words: Cleft lip, congenital deformities, pregnant women, and psychological condition.

Introduction:

Cleft lip and cleft palate are characterized by openings or splits in the upper lip, the roof of the mouth (palate), or both. These conditions occur when the facial tissues of an embryo do not fully fuse. Cleft lip and cleft palate are among the most common congenital deformities, often appearing as separate anomalies but also associated with various genetic syndromes or conditions.[1]

The term "cleft lip" is used because the lip of the affected individual appears split, and it is sometimes colloquially referred to as "harelip" or "schrim" due to the appearance of the lip and nose.[2]

Clefts of the lip and palate are among the most prevalent genetic facial and oral deformities, occurring during early pregnancy due to a deficiency in tissue in the lip or palate area. Normally, the tissues forming inside the mouth should connect properly during this period. The lips and the roof of the mouth start to form between approximately seven to nine weeks of gestation. The lips develop first, followed by the growth of the hard and soft palates, which can develop independently of each other. Therefore, clefts can occur in the lip alone, the palate alone, or both.