

EDWARD AHN: My name is Edward Ahn. I'm a pediatric neurosurgeon. And I'll be working on the treatment, the surgical treatment of all neurological disorders of children here at the Mayo Clinic.

Craniosynostosis is, as we mentioned, the early fusion of the bony plates on the skull. And it results in really abnormal shaped heads. And this can often be picked up soon after birth. And it's something that requires surgical treatment. And the standard treatment has been an open calvarial vault remodeling, which is still performed and still something that I do personally.

However, the concerns about that intervention are that it's very invasive for the babies. Because it's so invasive, it involves a long operation, blood loss, and long hospital stay. We usually wait until the infants are older and typically above six months of age.

There is another form of treatment that we offer and that is an endoscopic approach. And that is a minimally invasive operation. But the key to that operation is that it's detected early and the procedure's done early. And with this type of intervention, the results can be good, if not better, than the traditional procedure.

However, the benefits are that it's done through a very small incision. And the operation is a lot shorter. The babies do not need to stay in the hospital very long, just usually one night. But the key is, again, an early diagnosis. So we really encourage those who are on the front lines-- the families, and the pediatricians, the family doctors-- to refer the babies early if there's a suspicion for something like this.