

## Removal of tumour on toddler believed Canadian first

BY IRWIN BLOCK, MONTREAL GAZETTE    SEPTEMBER 2, 2009



Jayden Cambridge, now 18 months sits with Dad Ron Cambridge left, and Mom Tanya Comeau at Benny Park, a western borough of Montreal Tuesday Sept. 01, 2009. Jayden was born with a tumour in the middle of his forehead, doctors at the Montreal Children's removed the tumour using an endoscopic technique believed to be a first in Canada.

**Photograph by:** Tyrel Featherstone, Montreal Gazette

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MONTREAL — A few weeks after Jayden Cambridge was born last February his parents noticed something was wrong.

A bump the size of a large blueberry sat prominently in the middle of the child's forehead.

Though their pediatrician at first suggested it might recede, it did not and last week plastic surgeon Dr. Nabil Fanous performed what is believed to be a medical first for Canada: removing the tumour through Jayden's scalp in a 90-minute operation at the Montreal Children's Hospital.

His concerned parents, Rod Cambridge and Tanya Comeau, are thrilled.

"He won't have that scar on his forehead, which would get bigger as he grows," Cambridge said Tuesday. "We're very happy with the results. Everyone was fantastic with us, pre- and post-surgery. They told us what to expect, and were available almost 24/7."

The search for a solution began when the family consulted Dr. Sherif Emil, director of pediatric surgery at the hospital, who ordered a CT scan and determined it was a benign tumour — a sacklike growth called a "dermoid cyst."

Because it could grow or rupture, Emil wanted it removed.

But the traditional method — cutting into the skin and muscle directly above the growth — would leave an ugly scar that would have become more unsightly as he aged.

Emil had read an article about a new technique, used by pediatric surgeons at Stanford University in California, which removes benign forehead masses by entering with a camera and precision instruments through the scalp to avoid scarring the face.

But to the best of the surgeon's knowledge, it had never been done on a baby in Canada.

He began a search for the right surgeon and contacted Fanous, associate professor of facial and plastic surgery and head surgery at McGill and Sherbrooke universities, who immediately said yes, it was technically feasible.

His only concern was the "forest" of muscles, nerves and vessels under the skin.

His conclusion: "As long as you do not damage any of this, you're OK. As long as the surgeon has solid knowledge of the anatomy of the face and the technique, there is very little risk."

Having done this procedure "hundreds of times" on adult forehead lifts, Fanous readily agreed.

His main adjustment: While the Americans used a 2.5-centimetre incision, Fanous slimmed it down to 1.3 centimetre.

The big surprise came when he entered the scalp and could not detect the tumour on the monitors.

"For five minutes we wondered, what had happened?" Fanous recalled.

"I started digging a little bit and slowly the bone lifted off the crater (where the tumour was sitting) and the tumour started lifting off, too."

It was gently scraped off the bone and removed.

"To the best of our knowledge, this is the first ever reported case with a bone burying the tumour while using this technique."

About 10 doctors and nurses participated in the 90-minute surgery.

"We are very happy," Fanous said. "This technique should be adopted and most surgeons can learn

this technique and use it on children eventually."

And Jayden benefits from not having to live with an ugly scar or the swelling and bleeding that results from cutting into skin and muscle.

"This was a basically bloodless operation," Fanous said.

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