

# The 'Jedward' versus the 'Mohawk': a prospective study on a paediatric distraction technique

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## ABSTRACT

**Objective** To examine the use of a standard hospital glove, inflated as a balloon with a face drawn on it, as a distraction technique in children with an acute injury.

**Methods** We designed a study to assess the 'best' way to orientate the glove when drawing a face on it. A prospective study was performed in the authors' institution, where all children between the ages of 2 and 8 years presenting during the study period were given the option of playing with one of two glove balloons with a face drawn on it in two different ways.

**Results** 149 paediatric patients were assessed, of whom 136 picked a glove, 75 picked the 'Jedward' version and 61 the 'Mohawk' version.

**Conclusions** A standard hospital glove, inflated as a balloon with a face drawn on it, is a useful distraction for children with an acute injury. The face drawn should be drawn 'Jedward' style.

## INTRODUCTION

Distraction techniques for children with an acute injury are an important part of their care in an emergency department (ED).<sup>1</sup> Over time, blowing up a hospital glove as a distraction for children became common practice in our ED. A face was then drawn on the glove to enhance the effect. There are two common ways in our ED that this can be done, one where the five digits form the hair and the second where the thumb represents the nose and the remaining four digits resemble the hair. The first became known as the 'Jedward', as it resembles a popular music group's hair-do, (see figure 1), while the latter became known as the 'Mohawk', for a similar reason, (see figure 2). The aim of this study was to assess if this is a useful tool to distract children and which type of glove balloon face works best.

## METHOD

We performed a prospective study in our paediatric ED on all children presenting with an acute injury between the ages of 2 and 8 years to assess which type of glove balloon face they preferred. Consecutive patients presenting between 08:00 and 20:00 during the study period of 21 days were given the option of picking the 'Jedward' or the 'Mohawk' by a doctor after presentation. Patients were excluded if they needed resuscitation. A computer-generated block randomisation process was used to determine which hand was used to present the balloon face, to avoid natural left or right handed preference. Visual and auditory cues were also avoided to eliminate bias. An attempt to standardise the size of each inflated glove was made by keeping the distance between the tip of the second and fifth digits at between 12 and 14 cm. A



Figure 1 The 'Jedward'.

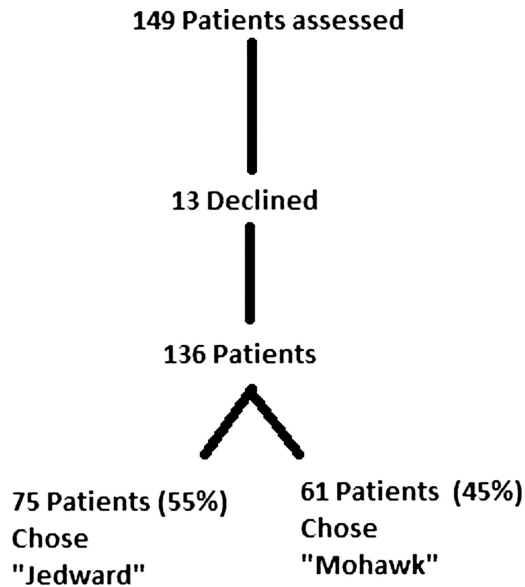
minimum sample size of 97 patients was calculated in order to have a margin of error of <10%. A consent form was signed by all guardians and all participants were given appropriate safety advice.



Figure 2 The 'Mohawk'.

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## Short report



**Figure 3** Summary of results.

## RESULTS

During the study period 149 patients were assessed, (see figure 3). Of those 13 declined to pick a glove. Of the remaining 136 patients, 75 (55%) picked the 'Jedward' and 61 (45%) picked the 'Mohawk'. The 95% CI for the proportion of patients who preferred the 'Jedward' was 0.47 to 0.64. This reading includes 0.5 so there is little evidence to suggest that there is a preference for one over the other. The p value is 0.18, which is low and suggests a preference for the 'Jedward', but not  $<0.05$ , which would suggest statistical significance.

## DISCUSSION

Pain is the commonest presenting complaint of patients to an ED.<sup>2</sup> Psychological, emotional and behavioural factors are likely to influence the perception of pain in paediatric patients.<sup>1</sup> This prospective randomised study shows that most children with acute pain secondary to injury are happy to play with an inflated glove with a face drawn on it. The authors believe that our distraction tool is of benefit in helping paediatric patients deal with the psychological effect of being in an ED.

This distraction tool is regularly used in our ED but has never been described in the medical literature. The idea for this study arose out of a discussion between two members of medical staff over which version of the face works better. There is a slight, but statistically insignificant, preference for the Jedward version of the glove.

## CONCLUSION

A standard hospital glove, inflated as a balloon with a face drawn on it, is a useful distraction for children with an acute injury. The face should be drawn 'Jedward' style.

**Contributors** EF is responsible for the original concept and design of the study. EF and ED assessed the potential subjects and performed the test. All authors contributed to, and proofread, the article.

**Competing interests** None.

**Ethics approval** Tallaght Hospital ethics board.

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