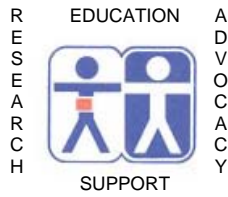


# SpineCare Foundation

## A Research and Information Brochure



for  
children with spinal disease and disorder

### **Policy for the participation of Down syndrome children in sport. The question of C1-2 instability.**

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The screening of Down syndrome children for C1-2 instability is a very contentious question. The Foundation supported a review of experience over 25 years at the two children's hospitals in Sydney during which not one DS child in New South Wales suffered a spinal cord injury from C1-2 instability. An extensive review of the existing literature on the subject was carried out and the following policy was developed.

The Foundation does not support the radiographic screening of the cervical spine for possible Atlanto-axial (C1-2) instability in adolescents with Down syndrome prior to their participation in sport.

The Foundation strongly recommends that any child/adolescent with Down syndrome who:

- complains of persistent neck pain;
- has a refractory torticollis (wry neck);
- is noticed to have a decreased stamina of recent onset;
- has a recent disturbance of gait; or
- has loss of previously controlled urination

should undergo a thorough physical examination by a qualified medical practitioner prior to participation in sport.

The full paper on this subject is published in the Medical Journal of Australia, Vol 165, p 448-450, 1996.

The adoption of this policy has not been followed by any untoward events in DS children.

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