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**Concerning the article by Horgan MA and Piatt JH, Jr.
Pediatr Neurosurg 1997;26:180-184**

Shaving of the Scalp May Increase the Rate of Infection in CSF Shunt Surgery

Dear Sir,

In this paper, the study population that was followed for a mean of 13.4 months was compared with the control population studied for 38.6 months. Of note, the controlled population consisted of patients who were operated on just at the time that the senior author began his practice in Oregon, until February of 1993, and the study population then included patients that were done after 1993. Certainly, with respect to shunt infections, it has been demonstrated that the experience of the surgeon is a significant factor in the rate of infection, and, in fact, it would be quite common to note that there was an increase in the infection rate in the less expe-

rienced surgeon. Certainly, the senior author gained a significant amount of experience between 1989 and 1993 which is his study population, and, in fact, with or without a decision to shave, his rate of infection may have been 3.3% in the same population as compared with his early experience in shunting. The data did not reach a statistical significance, and we think that to suggest that even though there may be a trend, it is not statistically significant, is not correct or accurate. We think that it is premature to suggest that shaving of the scalp may actually increase the rate of infection in cerebrospinal fluid shunt surgery based on this study.