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**IMPROVED CHILD ABUSE DETECTION BY SPECIFIC MODIFICATIONS IN  
EMERGENCY-ROOM QUESTION FORMS**

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Child abuse is a hot topic in the last decades. It is generally assumed that 6-10% of all children presenting with trauma in the Emergency-Room (ER) are victims of child abuse. Despite a great deal of attention, adequate detection of child abuse remains very difficult.

In an attempt to improve child abuse detection in the ER, we modified the ER question forms for patients up to the age of 16. To this end we included specific questions that forced the ER-personnel to judge (1) the nature of the trauma, (2) the probability of the given explanation of the trauma and (3) the adequacy of the actions taken after the 'accident'. According to specific criteria a pediatrician was called immediately for further investigations. All forms were checked for suspicious signs by a pediatrician within a few days after the ER-visit. After a period of one year the findings were evaluated and compared with the previous years. The introduced modifications resulted in a significant increase in detection rates and in 'child-abuse-awareness' of the medical staff. Detailed results of the study will be presented.

