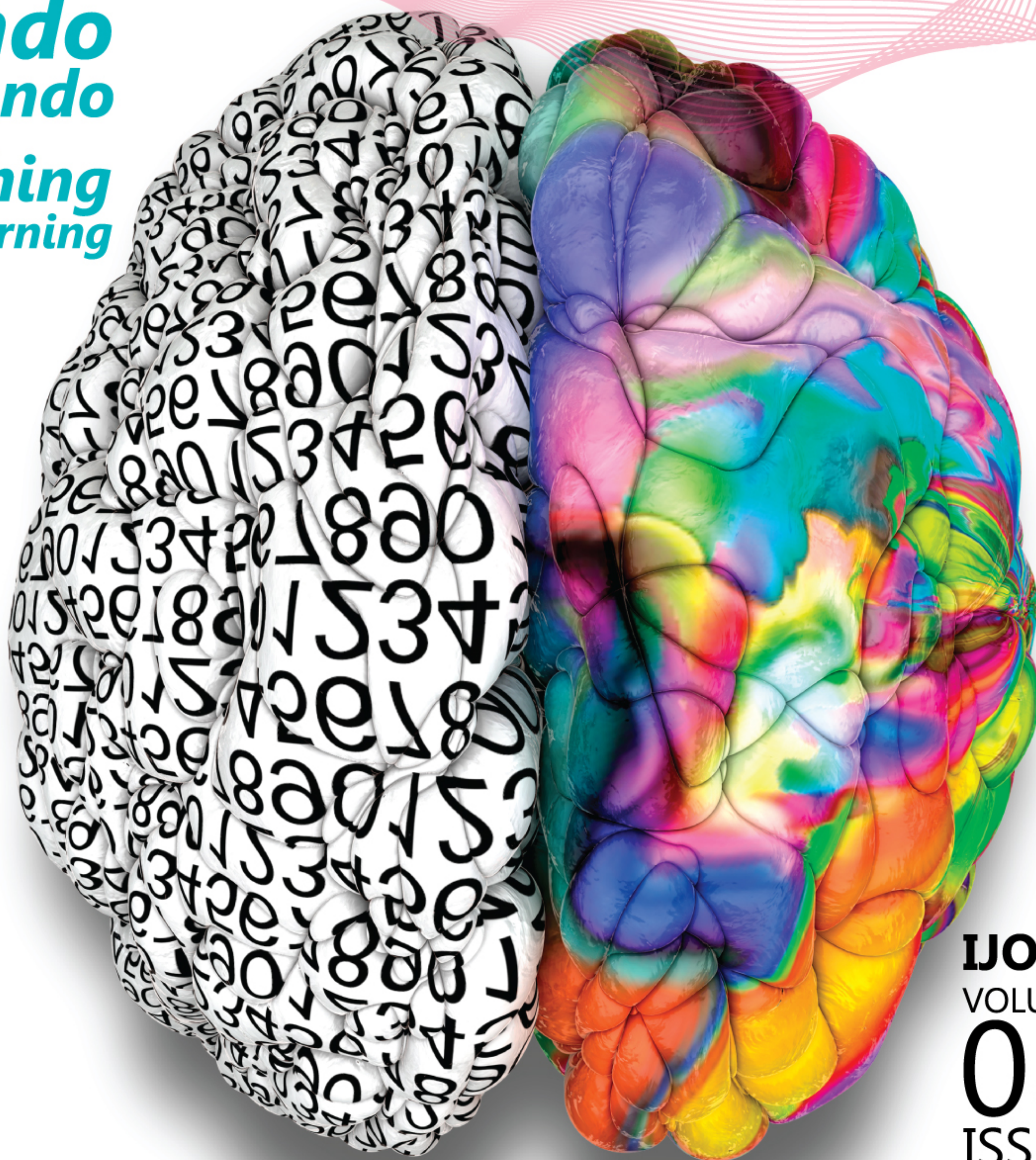


INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CLINICAL SKILLS

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A Peer Reviewed International Journal for the Advancement of Clinical Skills

— JULY —
2014

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Foreword

Welcome to the latest edition of the International Journal of Clinical Skills (IJOCS), Volume 8, Issue 4, July 2014.

Studies demonstrate that medical students and newly qualified doctors feel underprepared with respect to writing prescriptions safely, with many suggesting there is insufficient formal teaching and a limited opportunity to practise the basic prescribing skills required during clinical attachments. Dr Stephen Knight and colleagues present a study which suggests that in a student's first clinical year a Peer Assisted Learning approach can link theory to practice and thus increase the knowledge, skills and attitudes required for safe prescribing. This study comes at a crucial time, when electronic prescribing is rapidly becoming the norm.

In the event of a lower limb injury, splintage is one of the most basic forms of initial management. It helps reduce movement, prevent further tissue damage and reduce pain. Whilst a number of splintage options are available to those in a hospital type setting, splintage options for an unprepared bystander are likely to be scarce. Mr Angus Maclean presents a method for quickly applying a splintage to a patient's lower limbs. This method is intended to be used in the pre-hospital setting, where no specialist equipment might be available.

Also in this issue, IJOCS Book Reviewers Dr Nahida Khan and Dr Jonathan Bath review 'The Top 100 Drugs' and 'Clinical Skills for Medical Students' respectively. When considering the fact that there are many drugs and clinical skills with which medical students and junior doctors have to familiarise themselves with, these two books are a valuable resource and they present all the necessary relevant information clearly and concisely.

As always, your feedback is invaluable for the continued development of the International Journal of Clinical Skills – the only peer reviewed international journal devoted to clinical skills. E-mail: feedback@ijocs.org

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A rapid method for splinting the lower limb using a patient's trousers

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Keywords

Pre-Hospital Care
Trauma
Lower limb
Splinting

Abstract

This paper presents a method for quickly applying splintage to a patient's lower limbs, that requires only that the patient be wearing long trousers. It is intended that this method be used in the pre-hospital setting, where no specialist equipment be available, for the stabilisation of fractures in the femoral or tibial shafts, or fractures around the knee.

In the event of injury to the lower limb, be it a fracture or some form of soft tissue disruption, splintage is one of the most basic forms of initial management. Splintage will help reduce movement at the site of injury, preventing further tissue damage and reducing pain and distress.

Whilst a number of splintage options are available to an ambulance crew or to those in a hospital setting, options for splintage to an unprepared bystander are likely to be scarce. The purpose of this technique is to provide an option for splinting the lower limbs, with no equipment necessary apart from the patient's own trousers. It is

particularly useful for transferring a patient out of danger or onto a stretcher.

The method involves rotating the cuffs of each trouser leg together, creating tension in the trousers and applying splintage as follows:

Step 1: Position yourself at the foot of the patient and hold your hand as demonstrated in Figure 1.

Step 2: Insert index and middle finger into the leg of one trouser leg at the bottom, and the ring and little finger into the other leg.

Step 3: Whilst holding the cuffs of the trouser, grip your hand into a fist and rotate your fist 180°.

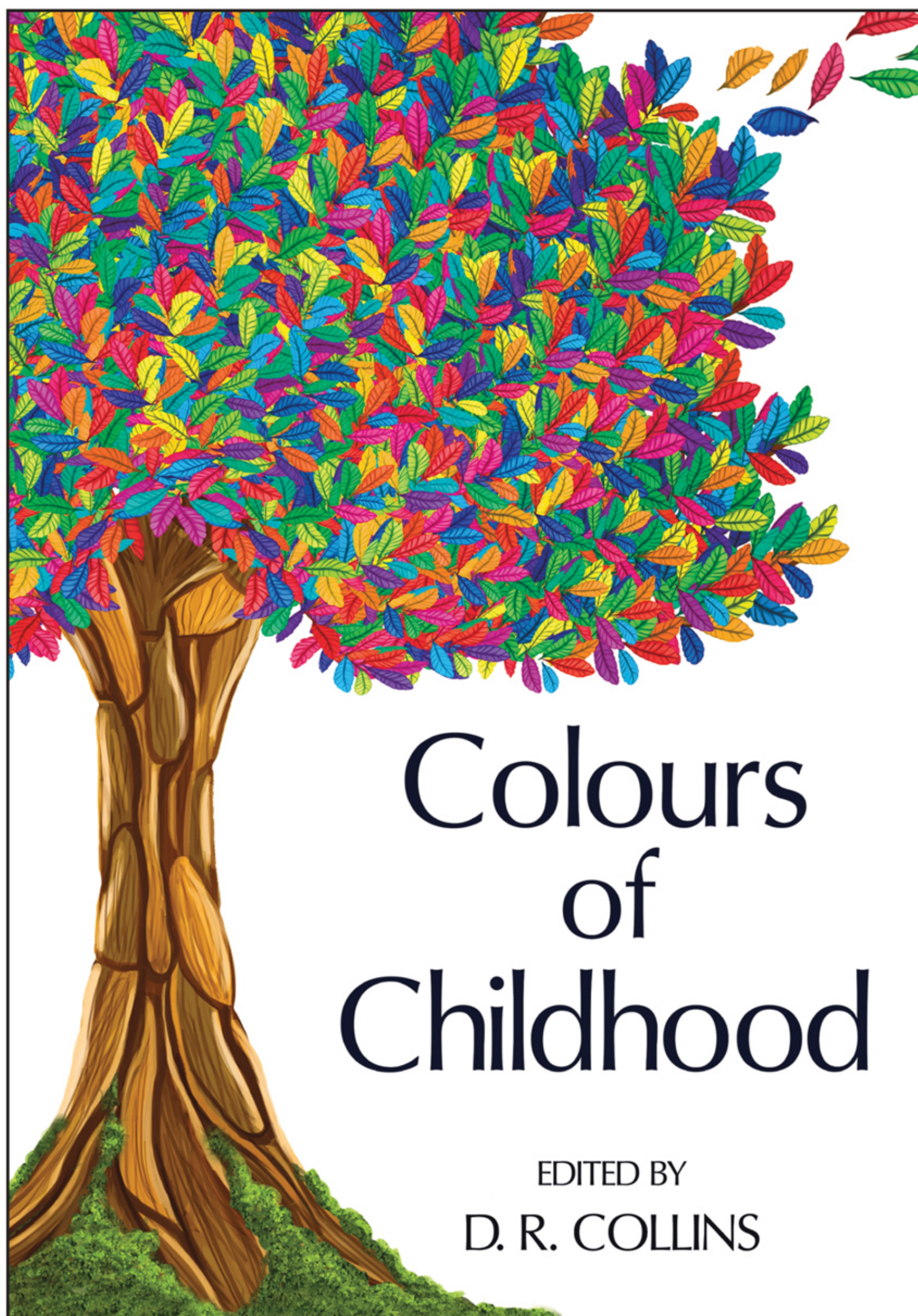
Step 4: With the material of the trousers now under tension the legs are effectively splinted, and can be lifted if necessary.

Figure 1: Applying tension to trousers by rotating the cuffs together. The legs can be held rigidly in this manner, providing splintage and facilitating transfer



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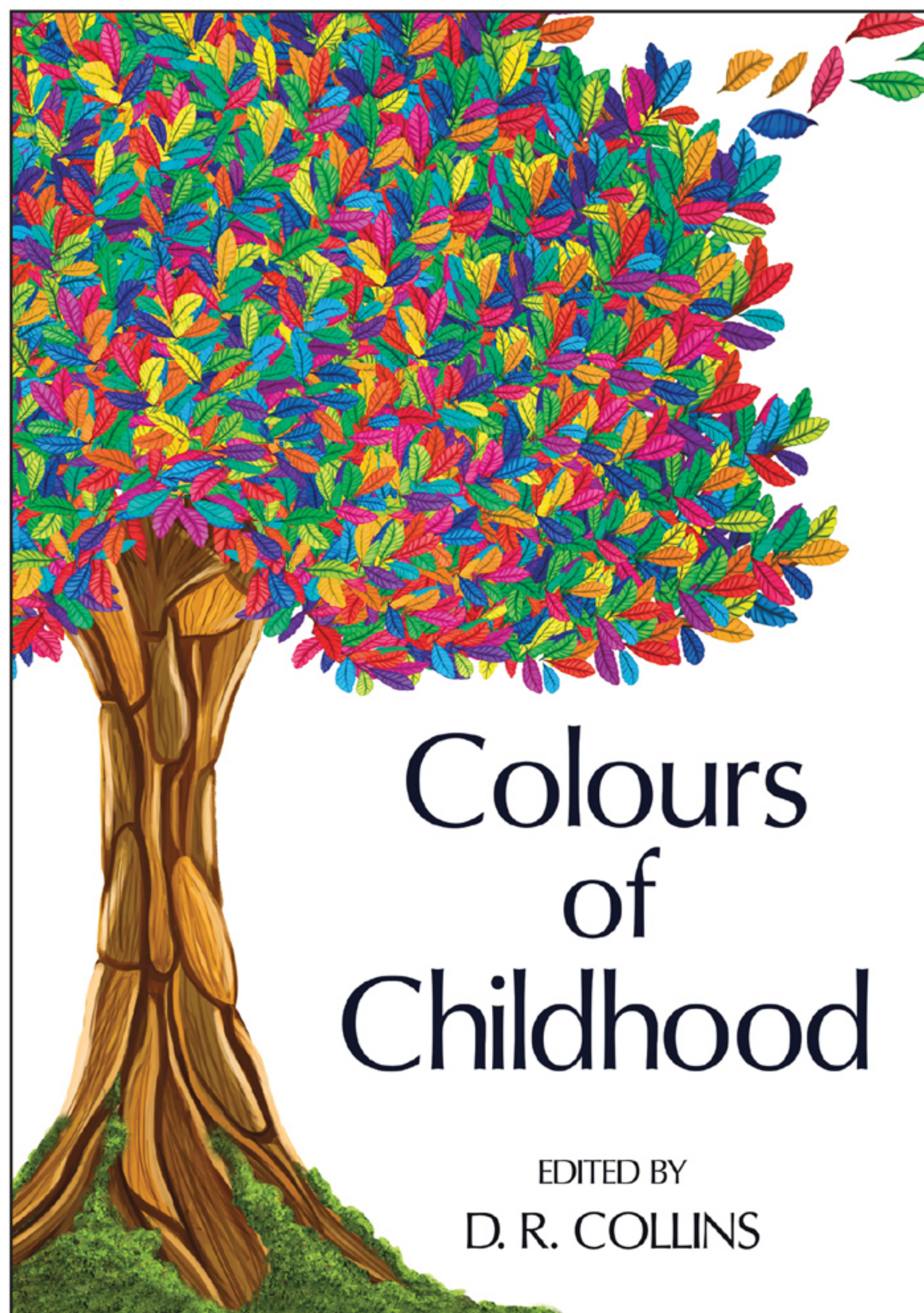
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