



Temple Street

CHILDREN'S UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL



**Treatment of
Dysplasia of the
Hips (DDH)
With a Pavlik
Harness
Information For
Parents and Carers**

Main Hospital Number

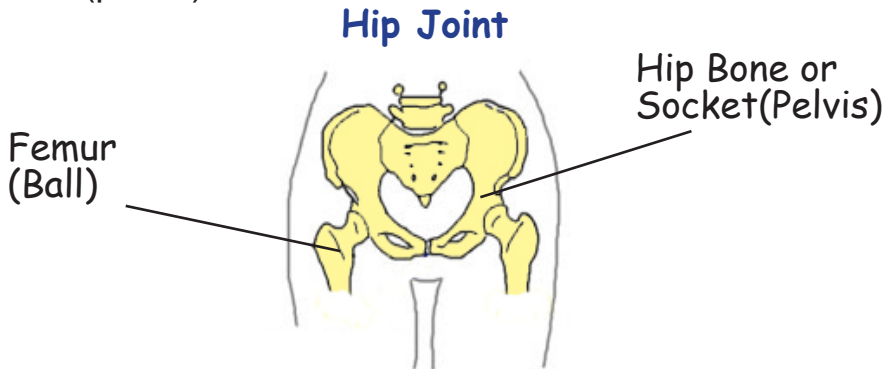
01 878 4200

What is DDH ?

Developmental Dysplasia of the hip (DDH) is a term used to describe a range of hip problems that can occur in babies and children. It can be divided into two groups:

- (A) Unstable (loose) hips which are detected by an ultrasound or examination by your doctor.
- (B) Hip dysplasia which is under-development of a child's hip socket. In small babies, this condition is sometimes not easy to detect; it may require an x-ray or ultrasound of the hips.

The hip is a ball and socket joint. In most children the top of the thigh bone (femur), which is shaped like a ball fits in to the socket of the hip bone (pelvis).



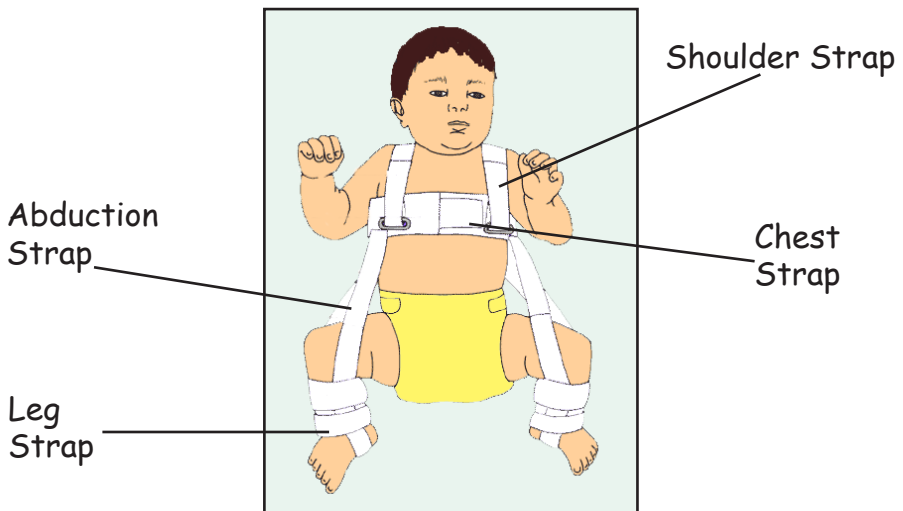
In babies with DDH, the thigh bone can slip out as your baby moves their legs. If this is not treated at an early age it may lead to problems later in your baby's life.

Pavlik Harness

To correct your baby's hip problem and help to prevent future problems, your baby will be placed in a Pavlik Harness for at least 6 weeks.

The harness will hold your baby's hips in the correct position as he/she kicks about. The harness will allow your child to move their legs normally which will stimulate blood supply and tighten the muscles around your baby's hip joint and allow their hips to develop.

Harness Diagram



As the ball of your baby's thigh bone grows it moulds the shape of their hip bone. As this happens the socket of your child's hip joint deepens and becomes more stable.

Your Child's First Visit

On your baby's first visit to the DDH Clinic your baby will be seen by the orthopaedic team. The doctors will examine your baby, look at their xrays or ultrasound and talk to you about a treatment plan.

If the treatment plan includes a Pavlik Harness this will be discussed with you and a schedule of weekly appointments will be agreed.

At first, it may seem daunting caring for your baby in a harness. On your weekly visits you can discuss any questions or concerns you may have with the DDH nurses.



Care of Your Baby While They Are in the Harness

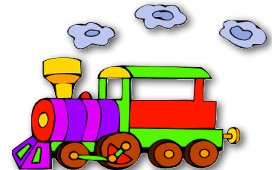
NAPPY

The harness is designed to allow you to change your baby's nappy without needing to remove the harness.

WASHING

Wash your baby every day with a face cloth or damp cotton wool. Applying Silock's Base on your baby's face, hands and bottom is enough.

It is important that you do not allow the harness to get wet as it may cause irritation of your baby's skin.



CLOTHES

Loose clothing will allow your baby to move his/her legs normally. Babygrows 1 or 2 sizes bigger than your baby's size are ideal.

In warm weather light clothing, (even just a vest and nappy) will help your baby from becoming overheated. Normally in warm weather, 1 layer over the harness is enough e.g. harness and babygrow.

In colder weather, 2 layers over the harness e.g. harness, vest and babygrow should be enough. A cardigan or jumper can also be worn if it is very cold. Remember the harness and padding are equal to 1 layer of clothing.

Daily Checks of Your Baby's Harness

Your newborn baby may gain about 150g-200g (5oz-7oz) in weight each week. It is important to check that the harness does not become too tight.

Once a day check there is enough room to place 3 fingers under the chest band of your baby's harness.

The chest band can be adjusted by opening the velcro fastening at the side.

Leg straps can be adjusted by opening the velcro fastenings. There should be room to place 1 finger under the leg straps of your baby's harness.

Do Not adjust the long vertical straps i.e. shoulder and leg straps as these straps help to maintain your baby's hips in a specific position to help the development of your child's hips.

It is important that you wash and carefully dry the area around your baby's groin three times a day to prevent skin irritation. Vaseline will help prevent friction or chapping. Do not use baby wipes as they may irritate your baby's skin.

Bathing

When you visit the clinic each week the nurse specialists will help you bath your baby. Please bring the following items with you to the clinic:

- ➡ Towel, Sponge
- ➡ Nappies
- ➡ Vaseline, Silcock's base
- ➡ Change of clothes
- ➡ Socks or tights (size 6-12 months of age)
- ➡ Spare harness (washed as advised by nurse)



Points to Remember

- ➡ Place your baby on their back as much as possible to allow full movement of your baby's hips
- ➡ You can use a baby sling if you wish
- ➡ Remember to bring all items on the list with you for each appointment
- ➡ If you can not attend please contact us to rearrange a new appointment as soon as possible
- ➡ Please do not adjust the shoulder or leg straps on your child's harness unless instructed to do so
- ➡ If the orthopaedic nurses are unavailable, please contact your GP if you have any concerns about the harness

If you cannot attend your clinic appointment please contact us as soon as possible to arrange for another appointment.

Clinic Times Wednesday 10am-2pm
 Thursday 10am-2pm

Telephone 01 878 4595

Outside these hours please contact the
orthopaedic nurse

01 878 4200 Bleep 900

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The information contained in this leaflet is correct at time of print