

# Developmental Dysplasia of the Hip (DDH)

This leaflet is to be used in conjunction with the 'Steps' Charity leaflet titled 'Caring for Your Child in a Pavlik Harness – The Parents' Guide'.

[Pavlik-Harness.pdf \(stgeorges.nhs.uk\)](#) If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to the staff member in charge of your care.

## What treatments are available?

If your baby's scan has shown they have DDH of one or both hips they will be referred to the specialist physiotherapy team. A physiotherapist will contact you on the phone and arrange an appointment in clinic within 5 working days of receipt of the referral. The physio will talk to you on the phone to explain an overview of what to expect at the appointment, but in brief we will do the following:

- Full assessment of your baby
- Education on what DDH is and the treatment pathway
- Pavlik Harness application
- Education on caring for your baby in Pavlik harness (including cleaning, how to position and handle your baby, etc)

Things to bring to the appointment:

- Larger clothes (1-2 size up, avoiding tights and trousers if possible)
- Baby carrier / sling (if you have one)
- Blanket

Your baby will be seen in clinic on a regular basis, initially weekly then fortnightly, until the harness is ready to be removed. Time in harness varies depending on how the hips develop, but on average is between 6-12 weeks.

## What happens if my baby does not get treatment?

The hip will likely not develop normally causing it to become more unstable and grow abnormally. This could result in early arthritis and difficulty walking as well as pain later. Surgical management involving the soft tissues and/or bones may be required.

## Is there anything I can do to help my baby?

While awaiting the initial appointment, please continue to move and handle your baby as you have been - you will not hurt them or worsen their hips in any way. There are, however, a few things you can do to help as outlined below:

- Avoid swaddling your baby's legs, as the best position for hip development is in a frog position.
- Do not lie your baby on their side for prolonged periods.
- Start to or continue to complete supervised tummy time at regular intervals throughout the day.
- Encourage floor play on their backs and tummies (use baby bouncers and car seats as little as possible)
- Using a baby carrier/sling can help hips develop, provided thighs are supported well, knees are at the same height or higher than the bottom and baby's legs spread around the adult's torso (see image below)

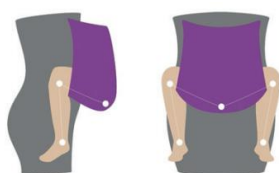


Image from STEPS 'Baby Hip Health'

## Useful sources of information

If you would like further information about Baby Hip Health and DDH, please visit STEPS Charity website at: [www.stepsworldwide.org/conditions/hip-dysplasia-ddh](http://www.stepsworldwide.org/conditions/hip-dysplasia-ddh)

## Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about immature hips, please contact the Children's Physiotherapy Team via email at [DDHPhysio@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:DDHPhysio@stgeorges.nhs.uk).

**For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit [www.stgeorges.nhs.uk](http://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk)**

## Additional services

### Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough wings (near the lift foyer).

**Tel:** 020 8725 2453 **Email:** [pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk)

### NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

**Web:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

### NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones. **Tel:** 111

## AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website ([www.accessable.co.uk](http://www.accessable.co.uk)). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.



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