

# Immature Hips

This leaflet offers information about immature hips.

## What does 'immature hips' mean and why has my baby presented with this?

The hip consists of a ball and socket joint - the top of the thigh bone is shaped like a ball which fits into a socket on the side of the pelvis.

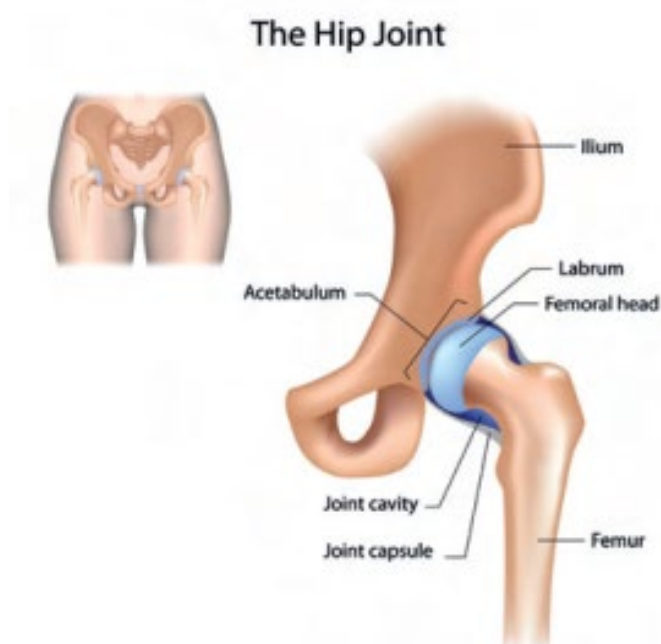


Image from STEPS 'Baby Hip Health' leaflet

In babies, the socket starts out being quite small and shallow, like a saucer. The socket continues to develop after birth to be larger and deeper, more like a cup, so that the ball of the thigh bone fits into it more securely.

When babies are very young their hips are made up of soft cartilage, which gradually turns into bone over a few years. The ligaments and muscles that help keep the hip in the socket also continue to develop and get stronger.

Most babies hips develop well without any treatment at all. About 1-3% of babies will be born with a degree of dysplasia. This is more likely to be the case if your baby was breech, or if there is any family history of hip problems as a baby/infant that required harness or surgery.

## What are the signs and symptoms?

The typical signs are stiffness when moving the hips outwards (in a frog-position) and a visual difference in leg length, although some babies don't have any visible signs.

## Do I need any tests to confirm the diagnosis?

Some babies will need to have a hip ultra-sound scan (USS) to check if their hips are developing as they should for their age.

## What treatments are available?

If your baby's scan has shown they have immature hips, but your baby is less than 12 weeks of age and both their hips are located in socket, your baby will be booked in for a repeat hip ultrasound scan at 12 weeks of age.

If your baby's hips have spontaneously matured by 12 weeks of age no treatment is required.

If your baby's hips remain immature at 12 weeks-of-age a diagnosis of Developmental Dysplasia of the Hip (DDH) may be likely. You will then be referred to the specialist physiotherapy team. A physiotherapist will aim to see you after your scan, or within five working days of receipt of the referral.

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

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.

Do:

- Start to or continue to complete supervised tummy time at regular intervals throughout the day, on the floor and/or on your chest.
- Encourage floor play on their backs and stomach.
- 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)

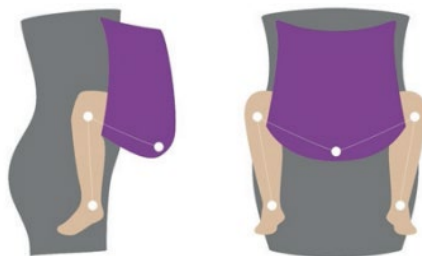


Image from STEPS 'Baby Hip Health'

Don't:

- Avoid swaddling your baby's legs (wrapping them tightly). The best position for hip development is in a frog position.
- Do not lie your baby on their side for prolonged periods.
- Use baby bouncers and car seats for limited amounts of time.

## Useful sources of information

If you would like further information about Baby Hip Health and DDH, please visit STEPS Charity website at: [Hip Dysplasia \(DDH\) - STEPS Charity](#)

## Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about immature hips, please contact the following teams:

Radiology Department – for information about scanning appointments:

Email - [radiologydepartment@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:radiologydepartment@stgeorges.nhs.uk)

Telephone 0208 725 3037

Children's Physiotherapy Team – for information about treatment and management:

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 of 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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