

Overwhelmed? We got you.

We are a one-stop specialty clinic for the diagnosis and non-operative treatment of developmental dysplasia of the hip (DDH) in infants. We are committed to providing you with easy-to-follow, effective and safe evidence-based care options for your child.

Your baby has developmental dysplasia of the hip (DDH). This is a common condition in newborns worldwide where the baby's hip joint has not formed properly. The joint is unstable and may have general looseness (mild DDH) or may be fully dislocated (severe DDH). One in 1000 babies are treated for DDH, and the good news is that DDH is easily treatable with a high success rate of up to **95%**!

Please follow the clinician guidelines for care instructions and see tips from caregivers to support your child's treatment.

Overview

Harness: Your baby will be using the Pavlik harness orthosis. This harness is used to correct DDH. It is a set of soft straps that hold your baby's hips in the correct position, with legs apart and knees bent.

Daily use: The harness is worn 24 hours per day to start. Once the Baby Hip Clinic team confirms your baby's hips have been stable in the harness for a certain amount of time, you can remove the harness for one hour a day until the end of treatment.

Length of treatment: The length of treatment is specific to your child. The Baby Hip Clinic team will tell you how long your baby should wear the harness. The typical length of treatment is 12 weeks.

Harness adjustments: As your baby grows, the harness may require adjustment. These adjustments may occur at regularly scheduled in-person appointments but can also be guided virtually by the care team and adjusted from the comfort of your home.



Scan the QR code to visit the DDH learning hub
www.aboutkidshealth.ca/hipdysplasia

Hip dysplasia

is the most common abnormality in newborn infants

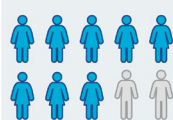


6 in 10 cases occur in firstborn children



Hip dysplasia is approximately **12** times more likely when there is a family history

8 in 10 cases are female



Ultrasound studies have demonstrated hip instability in up to **15%** of all newborns



Newborns in the breech position have a **12-24%** incidence of hip instability



95% cases are successfully treated with a Pavlik harness

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Baby Hip Clinic team

Orthopaedics at SickKids

Our team includes physicians, physiotherapists, orthotists, sonographers, fellows, residents, and research staff who work together towards a program that works efficiently for our patients and their families. Our team approach builds on our scientific strength and promotes innovative research that advances scientific knowledge.



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Harness care

1. Keep the harness clean and dry.
2. Use a bib to protect the harness from spit-up or drool. **TIP:** Wrap a breast pad, maxi pad, or gauze around the top straps to protect them from being soiled.
3. Spot-clean the harness with a cloth or toothbrush and mild detergent, dish soap or baking soda and water. When your baby is allowed time out of the harness by your health care team, take the opportunity to wash the harness by hand in cold water or in the washing machine on a delicate setting, and make sure to dry it on a low/cool setting. Do this only if the harness is soiled.

Baby care

Below are some general tips, developmental guidelines, and solutions to help you in caring for your baby while they have their harness.

Note: Avoid anything (clothes, seats, swings, etc.) that pushes the legs together. The legs should also not be forced apart but should fall naturally apart within the harness.

Baby positions

Hip-healthy position: The clinic team will show you the “frog legs” position. A good frame of reference is ensuring your baby’s legs form an “M” position when being held, carried, or laying down.

Positions to avoid: Holding knees together and legs straight, like in tight swaddling.

Holding your baby: Support your baby with your hand between their legs.

Feeding: Balance your baby on your lap with their legs spread open in an “M” position. If your baby has one-sided (unilateral) hip dysplasia, hold them with the affected side away from your body. For breastfeeding try the seated straddle position (koala hold), the football position, the modified cradle position, or simply laying down.



Baby positions

Sleeping: Your baby should sleep on their back. Do not swaddle your baby's legs tightly. **TIP:** Special wide-bottomed sleep sacks are available to order online. See links below.

Playing & tummy time: Stretch and play with your baby's legs within the confines of the harness. It is good exercise, helps with digestion and your baby's mood. Tummy time is still possible, so encourage tummy time if the clinic team says to do so. It is very helpful in forcing the hips out in the optimal "frog-legged" position.

Carriers: Most baby carriers are safe because they keep the legs apart in an "M" position. Do not swaddle. If unsure, review with the clinic team.

Car seats: Adjust the straps of the car seat to accommodate your baby's position in the harness. Aim to limit drives to under one hour. For longer drives, give your baby a 10-15 minute break out of the car seat. This will help to remove any tension in the straps.



Product recommendations

The International Hip Dysplasia Institute (IHDI) is a not-for-profit collaborative effort to improve the health and quality of life of those affected by hip dysplasia. SickKids is one of the many medical centres globally that supports this group to promote prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of hip dysplasia, and provide education and advocacy.

Please see below for recommendations on hip-healthy products and resources for caregivers.



<https://hipdysplasia.org/hip-healthy-products>



<https://hipdysplasia.org/infant-child-other-resources-for-parents/>



Baby carrier



Sleep sack



Bassinet stroller

More helpful tips from caregivers

Baby gear



Families recommend:

- A stroller that allows a baby to lay flat (bassinet stroller).
- An ergonomic floor and booster seat.
- Sleep sacks/bags.
- A changing table where the baby can lay with their feet pointing towards caregiver.

Clothing



- Buy adaptive clothing and sleepwear made for babies with a harness for hip dysplasia.
- Dress baby in larger clothes to accommodate the harness: 1-2 sizes up in clothes and one size up for diapers.
- Dress baby in dresses, and bottoms with buttons.
- Use a collared shirt under the harness to prevent redness in neck area.

Hygiene



- Bathing daily is important. Sponge baths are recommended.
- Avoid moisture in baby's creases: wipe baby's creases with a damp cloth.
- Use socks to help keep the harness booties clean during messy diaper changes.

Appointments



- Try not to miss appointments, and try to ask lots of questions during appointments.
- Buy a discount multi-use hospital parking pass.
- If you can, bring grandparents or friends to help on long hospital days.