

Fact Sheet: Positional Talipes equinovarus exercises

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What is Positional Talipes?

This is a condition where your baby's ankle and foot (talipes means ankle and foot) are abnormally turned but flexible, meaning that it can easily and gently be moved into the normal position. This condition:

- is thought to be caused by baby's position in the womb with baby not being able to move their feet enough
- is common - about 1.5% of babies are born with this condition
- positional talipes is easy to treat and will not affect your baby's walking later

Talipes Equinovarus

Baby's foot turns inwards and downwards – toes pointed



What is the treatment?

You and your baby have been referred to a paediatric physiotherapist (therapist who has in special interest and skills in treatment of children and babies). Below are outlined some simple measures and exercises to make sure your baby's feet develop normally.

Basic advice:

- Allowing your baby lots of time to kick and move their feet and legs freely without tight clothing
- Avoiding tight shoes and baby-gros which fit too snugly. Wrap loosely around baby's feet.

Please check with your physiotherapist **BEFORE** doing any foot exercises to make sure they are suitable, and you are performing them correctly.

All exercises should be done when your baby is relaxed and not crying. The movements should **NEVER** cause pain.

Exercises to stretch the tightened muscles:

With talipes equinovarus the tight muscles are on the inside of baby's foot and the back of their leg

- Hold baby's lower leg with one hand and use your other hand to gently turn the foot in line with the lower leg and then a little back towards the shin.
- The stretch should be held for 10-15 seconds and should be done three times with each nappy change.



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Stimulating active movement

Tickling the outside border of the foot will cause the baby to pull their foot into a more normal position as shown below. This strengthens the muscle that helps baby turn their foot out.



Your physiotherapist will advise you on follow up check-ups if your baby needs them.

Positional talipes is a common condition of newborn babies and with very simple measures it should resolve. It will not cause long term harm to your child's walking or running. If you have any concerns or questions, please speak with our staff.



We welcome further feedback on this brochure as a way on continually improving our service.

Send your feedback to:

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