

## All about positional talipes

### Talipes calcaneo valgus / equino varus

#### Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio tape or computer disk, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, please telephone the PALS desk on 01271 314090.

This leaflet has been put together to provide you with information about positional talipes - what it is, what it looks like and how it can be treated.

### Positional talipes

Positional talipes describes the position in which a baby's foot is held at birth if this appears extreme. It can present as calcaneo valgus (calcaneo refers to the heel bone valgus describes it pointing outwards) or equino varus, also called positional clubfoot (the foot points downwards and inwards). For the purposes of this leaflet we refer to it as positional talipes.

#### What is it?

These foot postures – common at birth – can affect one or both feet (bilateral). Approximately 50% of cases will affect both feet. It occurs in one in every 1,000 babies, more often in boys than girls.

#### What causes it?

The cause is commonly due to the position of your baby in the womb, often due to his/her foot being stuck in one place. Occasionally it will run in families too.

#### How will it look?

At rest the foot will turn outwards and upwards, or downwards and inwards, but baby will usually be able to actively kick their foot out of this position.

#### Is it painful?

The condition is not painful, but needs to be kept an eye on, to ensure that your baby can walk with feet in midline when they are older.

## Can it be treated?

In positional talipes the bones of the foot will be normal, but held in an abnormal position. The foot will usually correct spontaneously or with appropriate passive stretches and muscle stimulation.

Your doctor will refer you to a physiotherapist who will visit you whilst in hospital. She/he will show you how to gently stretch and encourage your baby's foot into a midline position. If you do not think there has been any improvement in 2-3 weeks, you can self-refer to the Community Children's Physiotherapy Team. They are based at the Barnstaple Health Centre and their telephone number is 01271 341552.

## What are the long-term prospects?

With physiotherapy intervention and regular treatment most children do very well.

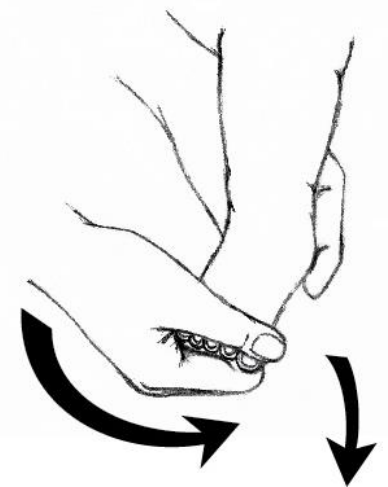
## Treatment

### Passive stretches for calcaneo valgus

With baby's knee bent, support the heel and ankle with one hand, and with the other hand use your finger and thumb to hold onto the front of the foot, and gently move the foot inwards and downwards. Hold this stretch for approximately five seconds, and repeat five times.

Gentle stroking and tickling along the inside border of baby's foot will encourage active movement in the opposite direction to which the foot is being held.

Check regularly that your baby's baby-grow is not too tight on the feet and hence restricting active movement.



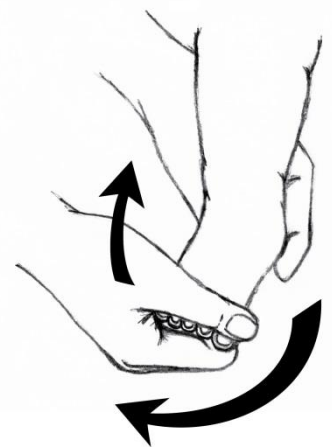
(Diagram showing baby's foot being stretched in the correct direction)

### Passive stretches for equino varus

With baby's knee bent, support the heel and ankle with one hand, and with the other hand use your finger and thumb to hold onto the front of the foot, and gently move the foot outwards and upwards. Hold this stretch for approximately five seconds, and repeat five times.

Gentle stroking and tickling along the outside border of baby's foot will encourage active movement in the opposite direction to which the foot is being held.

Check regularly that your baby's baby-grow is not too tight on the feet and hence restricting active movement.



(Diagram showing baby's foot being stretched in correct direction)

Carry out these stretches and stimulation at every nappy change. However, do not carry out the stretches on your baby if they are upset and crying, as you will not know if what you are doing is causing them any discomfort.

## Further information

Physiotherapy Department: **01271 322378**

Your physiotherapist is .....

### **PALS**

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or e-mail [ndht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ndht.pals@nhs.net). You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

## Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at [www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk).

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