



A guide to...

Positional Talipes Calcaneovalgus

Information about your baby's feet

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What is positional talipes?

Positional talipes calcaneovalgus is a common condition for newborn babies. The baby's foot/feet are turned upwards and outwards. It can happen in one or both feet. The baby's feet are still flexible and able to move well, achieving full range of motion.

Why do babies get positional talipes?

It is thought to occur due to the position of the baby when in the womb. The feet get held in a position for a long time, and this can lead to the muscles becoming tight. Positional talipes doesn't affect the bones or joints in the feet and should not impact on the development of the baby.

How is positional talipes diagnosed?

All babies will be screened for positional talipes by either a doctor or a midwife. If concerns are raised your baby will be assessed by a physiotherapist.

How is positional talipes treated?

Depending on the findings of the assessment, the physiotherapist will provide the following advice:

- How to perform exercises on the baby's foot and ankle
- Clothing ideas to make sure your baby's feet can move freely
- Massage ideas with oils / cream around any skin creases.

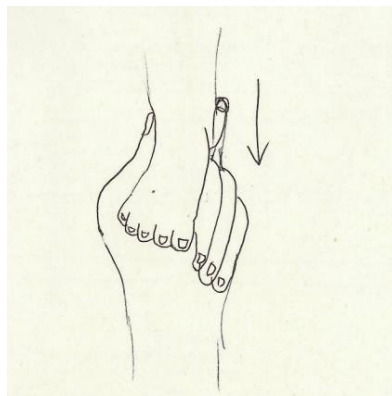
Exercises for positional talipes

You should try to do the exercises on each affected foot with each nappy change and at bath times. Your physiotherapist will advise you which exercises to do; you should continue to do these until your baby's feet move and rest in a 'normal' position. This should happen before they are two months old.

Always wait for your baby to be calm and settled before attempting the exercises.

Stretches

1. Use one hand to support your baby's calf. With your other hand hold the sides of the foot with your thumb and index finger.
2. Gently move your baby's foot to the middle, bringing it in line with their shin, then move your baby's foot downwards opposite to the direction of the shin
3. Hold the stretch for approximately 10 seconds, repeating three times.



Massage

- You can try massaging your baby's feet with your choice of oil/cream to prevent dry skin and to help relax and stretch the muscles
- The International Association of Infant Massage recommends the use of unscented vegetable oil, preferably organic and cold pressed.

General advice

- Allow your baby lots of time without any restrictive clothing/blankets over their legs in order to kick about.
- Avoid tight baby grows which make it difficult to freely move feet.

Will my baby need more physiotherapy?

Most positional talipes will resolve by itself; performing the exercises may help speed up the recovery. Your physiotherapist will advise you on whether follow up is required.

If your baby's talipes does not improve after two to three months, see your GP or health visitor for further advice.

References:

Danby, Simon G., et al. "Effect of olive and sunflower seed oil on the adult skin barrier: implications for neonatal skin care." *Paediatric dermatology* 30.1 (2013): 42-50.