

# Information sheet for babies with potential dysplasia of the hip (DDH)

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## Information for parents

This leaflet is designed for the parents of babies born with potential developmental dysplasia of the hip. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to a doctor, midwife, or nurse caring for you.

### What is developmental dysplasia of the hip?

Developmental dysplasia of the hip (DDH) is a condition where the ball and socket hip joint fails to develop normally. It can occur before birth or in the first months of life. In DDH, the socket of the hip joint is usually shallow and the ball (top of the thigh bone) can be loose or lying completely outside the socket (dislocated). About 2 in every 1,000 children are born with a hip that has one of these problems.

All children in the UK have their hips checked at birth, and again at six weeks, eight months and two years old. Although a normal examination does not completely exclude the condition, it increases the likelihood of DDH being identified early. If left untreated, DDH may lead to:

- the development of a limp when the child starts to walk
- pain in the hip, usually during teenage years
- the development of osteoarthritis (wear and tear arthritis) in adult life.

It is therefore important to detect and treat the condition as soon as possible.

### Ultrasound scan of the hips

If your baby's hip is felt to be dislocated when checked at birth, an ultrasound scan of the hip will be done within two to three weeks. Where the hip is not dislocated, but thought to be loose, an ultrasound scan will be organised within four to six weeks.

Some babies whose hips are found to be normal may still need an ultrasound scan in four to six weeks if they have an increased risk of DDH. Your ultrasound appointment will be sent to you in the post.

## Why might my baby be at greater risk of DDH?

Your baby is at a greater risk of DDH if:

- He/she was in a breech (feet or bottom first) position in the womb after 32 weeks gestation.
- Another close family member had hip problems as a baby
- There are other problems in the lower limbs.

Most hip problems in babies improve within the first two to three weeks without any treatment. In some babies, however, the hip remains unstable and/or the socket forms imperfectly, meaning that your child will require treatment to avoid problems later in life. It is therefore very important that you attend your baby's ultrasound appointment.

If you fail to attend the appointment as scheduled, a new appointment will have to be made, and time may be lost in starting important treatment. Delays in starting treatment may lead to further complications for your baby.

## When will I be given the results of the ultrasound scan?

Immediately after the scan, you will be told whether it is normal. 'Normal' means that your baby needs no further treatment. If the scan shows mild changes, a repeat ultrasound examination may be required. The ultrasound scan may also indicate that your baby needs to be referred to a specialist. If there is a need for further treatment your baby will see both the paediatric physiotherapy service and the paediatric orthopaedic doctors.

The paediatric physiotherapy service will send you an appointment within one to two weeks of the ultrasound. They will assess your baby and use a splint on to hold the hips in the correct position if necessary. If a splint is needed, it will be fixed at the first appointment. You will meet the paediatric orthopaedic doctor within four to six weeks of your baby's ultrasound. Your baby will have a further ultrasound six weeks later to monitor their hip development. The orthopaedic doctor will continue to see your baby and will advise on when the splint should be removed.

## Contact Us

### Additional Services

STEPS: [www.steps-charity.org.uk](http://www.steps-charity.org.uk) is a national charity supporting children and adults affected by a lower limb condition such as clubfoot or a hip condition. Their website is a great source of information but if you would like to talk to someone please call their helpline on 01925 750271 or email [info@steps-charity.org.uk](mailto:info@steps-charity.org.uk).

### Leaflet Details

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## **Other formats**

If you would like to receive this information in an alternative format, then please contact: 01539 715577.

## **Travelling to our hospitals**

For the best way to plan your journey visit our website: <http://www.UHMB.nhs.uk/> or contact Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS): 01539 715577.

## **Useful Contact Details**

NHS 111 (for 24 hour urgent health advice): telephone 111

## **Your Information**

If you would like to know how we use, share, disclose and secure your information and your rights of access to the information we hold about you, visit the Trust's website: <http://www.UHMB.nhs.uk/> or contact Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01539 715577.

## **Evidence**

Details of the evidence used in writing this leaflet are available on request from: Patient Information Officer at 01524 512476.

## **Feedback**

We appreciate and encourage feedback. If you need advice or are concerned about any aspect of care or treatment, please speak to a member of staff or contact PALS on 01539 715577.

UHMBT is a no smoking Trust. Smoking is not permitted on any of the hospital sites. You can contact the NHS North Lancashire Stop Smoking services on the number below:

NHS Quit Squad - **0800 328 6297**

If you live in Cumbria, please call **0300 013 3000** to find a local pharmacy who are offers 1-2-1 support and nicotine replacement therapy.

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