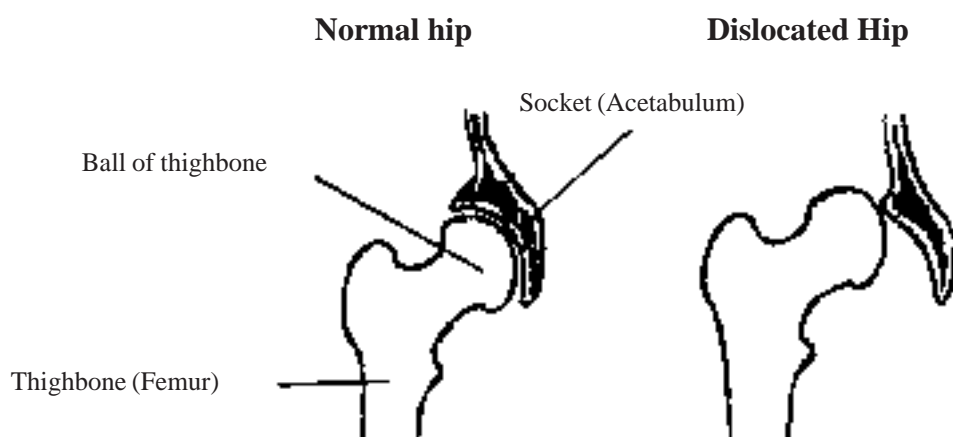


Developmental Dysplasia of the Hip

What is Developmental Dysplasia of the Hip or DDH?

DDH is a treatable condition that affects some babies. The hip includes the ball of the thighbone (femur) and the socket where the ball fits. This socket is also called the acetabulum. In babies born with DDH, the ball of the thighbone slips in and out of the socket. If your baby has DDH, it is very important to start treatment early to prevent problems later in life.



Although the cause of DDH is not known, there are some common factors:

- first-born babies
- girls
- babies who were born breech
- babies who are Caucasian or Native American

How is DDH found?

DDH is found by checking your baby's hips and doing an ultrasound or X-ray when needed. Some things that your baby's doctor may look for include:

- A hip click or clunk
- Limited hip movement
- A difference in leg lengths
- Increased skin folds on thighs

How is DDH treated?

DDH can be treated in a number of ways. Treatment depends on the age of your baby and the results from the hip exam and ultrasound or X-ray.

Treatment may include:

- Observation
- Harness
- Traction
- Surgery

Observation:

The doctor may want to watch your baby's hips closely. Sometimes babies' hips are loose at birth and the hips may tighten on their own after a few weeks.

Harness:

For babies under 6 months old, the doctor may recommend a soft, fabric brace called a Pavlik harness. The Pavlik harness keeps the hips in a "frog-leg" position. This holds the ball of the femur in the socket. Usually your baby will wear the harness for 23-24 hours a day for a few weeks. Then, the doctor will tell you how often your baby needs to wear the harness. It is **very important** for you and your baby to go to all your baby's clinic visits. Your baby may wear the harness for six weeks to three months. No further treatment is needed in 95 percent of babies treated with a Pavlik harness.



Pavlik harness

Traction:

If the Pavlik harness is not keeping your baby's hips in place, then the doctor may place your baby in traction. Bryant's traction uses soft wraps around the legs attached to weights. This loosens the muscles around the hip joints before surgery. If your baby needs traction, you and your baby will stay in the hospital overnight. During your hospital stay, your nurse will place your baby in Bryant's traction and teach you how to take care of your baby at home while he or she is in traction. Your baby will be in traction for two to three weeks before surgery.

Surgery:

Your baby may need surgery to place the ball of the femur into the socket. After surgery your baby will be in a hip spica cast. Your nurse will teach you how to take care of your baby while he or she is in the cast. Your baby will usually wear the cast for about eight weeks.