

PAVLIK HARNESS

What is a Pavlik harness?

- It is a harness that is applied to the baby that keeps the position of the hip joint to be aligned centred in the hip joint. It keeps the hips in a stable position and assists in the correct development of the hip. This a “dynamic brace”, thus allowing for movement of the hips within its settings when applied by the medical professional
- This is one of the safest, most effective treatment options for developmental dysplasia. It is applied from birth to 6 months of age. It is typically worn 23- 24 hours a day, but your doctor will instruct you.



My baby is unsettled and crying

- Is treatment is not painful. The baby will commonly be unsettled with the Pavlik harness applied for the first 24-48 hours as it is restrictive to their movement. They will generally “get used to it? And settle by the 3rd day.

Duration of harness

- The duration is variable and will be dictated by your medical practitioner. Depending on the severity of the dysplasia this will impact the duration. In most cases it is for a 12 week period with the possibility of being longer depending on the response of the hip to treatment and the severity.

When do I see the doctor?

- Initially your baby will need to be monitored week 1 and/or week 2 with an ultrasound and an adjustment will be performed to the harness. The harness will need adjustments to accommodate for growth every 2-3 weeks, this can be adjusted by your doctor or the physiotherapist or orthotist.
- Generally, there is a follow-up ultrasound following 6 weeks of treatment and the hours of its application may change depending on this result.

How do I care for the harness?

- The harness will get dirty and it is an accepted consequence of having a harness for times that are prescribed. Some parents opt to purchase 2 harnesses so they can

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PATIENT INFORMATION



wash one when the other is being used. It should only be removed under the instruction of the doctor and you will be taught how to apply and remove the harness. The harness is generally worn underneath your baby's clothes but can be applied on top. In severe circumstances requiring 24 hours of application the harness will need to be under clothing.

- Have larger clothing that allows for flexion and abduction of the hips, this may require clothing sizes to be 1 or 2 sizes larger. Also have larger sleeping bag help prevent restriction in the set position of the hips.

Bathing

- Generally, in the circumstance that your child is in the harness for 23 hours a day then your baby can bath during that 1 hours our of the harness. If your child is in the harness for 24 hours then they will not be able to bathe and will need to be wiped to clean them. Do not bath your baby with the harness on.

Nappies

- You will have access to the nappies with each change and the harness will not need to be removed.

Skin care

- Do not apply lotion on your baby's skin where it comes in contact with the harness, as it could moisten the skin and cause skin breakdown. The alternative is using a singlet and some families will make Pavlik harness strap covers or purchase them. Monitor the baby's groin area, folds and behind their knees. These areas often stay moist and can result in a rash and irritation. Wipe these areas with a cloth to keep them as dry as possible.

Positioning

- Then your baby is in the Pavlik harness, have them spend time on their back as this helps the knees to fall outward and to the side. If you need to swaddle just involve the arms and upper body. Do not swaddle the lower limbs. Bouncy chairs and swing should be avoided and limit time in them for 10-15 minutes a day.



When should I get worried?

- If there are any red and irritated areas of the skin that do not go away
- If you notice that your child is not kicking one or both legs
- If you are not able to reapply the harness

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