

DDH Clinic - Fact Sheet

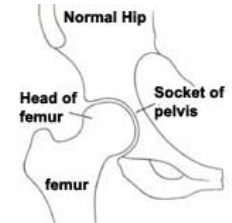
Geelong Orthotics Geelong Hospital Paediatric Orthopaedic Unit

Developmental dysplasia (or dislocation) of the hip (**DDH**) is an abnormal development of the hip joint. The ball at the top of the thighbone is not stable within the hip socket and the ligaments of the hip joint may also be stretched and loose.

Development of the Hip

Normal Hip

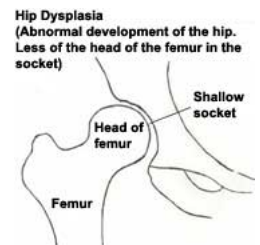
For the hip joint to grow normally the ball shaped head of the thigh bone (femur) needs to be inside the cup shaped socket on the side of the pelvis (called the acetabulum). The head of the femur is held in place by ligaments, muscles and a joint capsule.



Abnormal Development

If the head of the femur is not held tightly in place, the socket may be flatter than usual (acetabular dysplasia). This can lead to:-

- Subluxation – The head of the femur moves in and out of socket.
- Dislocation - The head of the femur remains out of socket.



How common is it?

Girls are affected much more than boys. This is related to female hormones causing lax joints.

About 1 in 300 girls have the condition in some form, whereas only 1 in 3000 boys are affected. The hip may become unstable just before or during birth.

How is it Diagnosed?

DDH is usually detected by an examination of your child's hips soon after birth. Problems may be detected by a midwife, maternal health nurse or doctor at birth or 6 week check up.

What treatment will be required?

If the condition is diagnosed at birth, most children can be successfully treated in a Pavlik Harness for six to ten weeks so that the hip remains in the socket. A follow up ultrasound is performed at 6 weeks and monitoring is done with ultrasound. Some hips diagnosed early may not be corrected with the Pavlik Harness and will need an alternative form of treatment.



Will Surgery be necessary?

Very few children require surgery

This depends on the severity of the hip dysplasia

When it is diagnosed

How the child responds to treatment in the pavlik harness or other bracing

If your child requires surgery this will involve

Anaesthetic to manipulate and re-position the head of the femur into the socket.

A plaster of paris Hip Cast (Spica) is then applied to maintain this correction.

If you have any problems or questions about the DDH please do not hesitate to contact us.

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