

Positional talipes (TEV) exercise information

This leaflet is for parents whose baby has been diagnosed with positional talipes – known as TEV. It provides information on the exercises to be carried out to help correct this condition. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to your physiotherapist.

What is TEV?

Positional talipes (*equino-varus*) is quite a common foot condition in newborn babies. It may affect one or both feet. It causes the foot to turn down and inwards when in the rested position but remains flexible (figure 1). Therefore, the foot can easily be moved into a normal position. It is thought to occur due to the baby's position in the mother's uterus.



Figure 1

It will be diagnosed after an assessment by either a midwife or doctor and you will be referred to a physiotherapist to be taught exercises.

Gentle exercises to the foot will help it to come around into a normal position. It is important to carry them out regularly (for example with every nappy change).

Exercises should be carried out whilst your baby is relaxed and should never be forced or painful.

Exercise 1

Gently bring your baby's foot into the middle and then upwards towards their shin. This may be held for a couple of seconds, or longer if your baby lets you without showing signs of distress.



Exercise 2

Gently move your baby's foot up and outwards.



Exercise 3

Gently stroke the outer border of your baby's foot and encourage the foot to move into a normal position.



Exercise 4

Once a day, for example at bath time, gently massage the inside arch of your baby's foot and ankle using baby oil or olive oil for a few seconds.



Positional talipes usually resolves with the exercises in the first few months. If you are concerned that the foot is stiff or not improving you should consult your child's GP.

Further information

Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust
Physiotherapy Outpatients
London Road, Reading
Berkshire RG1 5AN
Tel. 0118 322 7811 / 7812

References:

1. M Polden, J Mantle (1992) Physiotherapy in obstetrics and gynaecology. P393-397 London. Butterworth Heinemann
2. R Sapsford, J Bullock-Saxton, S Markwell (1999) Women's health: A text book for physiotherapists. P252-257 London. Harcourt Brace and company Limited

This document can be made available in other languages and formats upon request.

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