

# Healthy Hips

**Hip dysplasia**, also known as developmental dysplasia of the hip (DDH) or clicky hips, is a condition that affects the hip joints in babies and young children. It can be present at birth or develop as the child grows older. Untreated hip dysplasia can lead to hip pain and is the most common cause of hip arthritis in adults under 50 years. Early diagnosis and treatment is best, since late diagnosis may require surgical treatment.

Parents are encouraged to learn about the risk factors and potential signs of hip dysplasia, and to get their children's hips regularly checked from birth through to 5 years of age. Your GP or Child Health Nurse can complete this check.

**Wrapping and hip dysplasia:** Wrapping or swaddling newborn babies can help them feel more secure and comfortable. Research has shown that tight wrapping with the legs held straight can lead to hip dysplasia and dislocation. When this practice is stopped the frequency of dislocation is significantly reduced.

Every child's hips need checking at:

- ✓ Birth
- ✓ 6-9 months
- ✓ 1-4 weeks
- ✓ 18-24 months
- ✓ 6-8 weeks
- ✓ 3-5 years

Or at any other stage if you are concerned.

**1 in 10**

Full-term newborns have some hip instability



Hip dysplasia affects both girls and boys



There are a number of ways to wrap babies. Whatever method you choose, always remember:



- Leave enough room in the wrap for the legs to move freely in and out of their natural frog-like position.

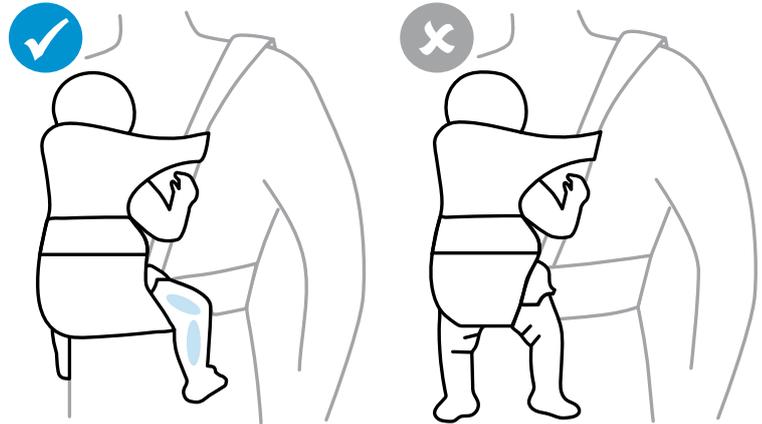


- The legs should be able to bend at the hips with the knees apart to help the hips develop normally.

## Healthy Hips continued

### Signs and symptoms of hip dysplasia

- > Leg(s) difficult to spread apart
- > When changing a nappy or at other times, one leg does not seem to spread as far out or as easily as the other
- > Difference in leg lengths
- > Limping when walking
- > Walking on tippy toes on one side
- > Favours one side when sitting, crawling or standing
- > Uneven buttock crease lines
- > Uneven skin creases on the back of your baby's thighs



Your baby carrier should:

- > Allow your baby's legs to straddle your body
- > Knees should be spread apart
- > Thighs supported and hips bent

## More information

**Child and Family Health Service** 1300 733 606, [www.cyh.com](http://www.cyh.com)

**Bone Health Foundation** [www.bonehealth.org.au](http://www.bonehealth.org.au), [info@bonehealth.org.au](mailto:info@bonehealth.org.au)

**Healthy Hips Australia** [www.healthyhipsaustralia.org.au](http://www.healthyhipsaustralia.org.au), [info@healthyhipsaustralia.org.au](mailto:info@healthyhipsaustralia.org.au)

**International Hip Dysplasia Institute** [www.hipdysplasia.org](http://www.hipdysplasia.org)

**Raising Children's Network** [www.raisingchildren.net.au](http://www.raisingchildren.net.au)

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