

Positional talipes

ORTHOPAEDIC FACT SHEET 44

Positional talipes (equino-varus) is a common foot condition in newborn babies that may affect one or both feet. In positional talipes the foot rests down and inwards (**Figure 1**) but remains flexible. It can therefore be gently moved into a normal position. The condition is thought to be caused by the baby's position while in the mother's uterus.

Managing the condition requires careful assessment and monitoring by the child's doctor, child health nurse or physiotherapist. **A baby with positional talipes should also have a hip examination.**

Gentle exercises to the foot may help. These should be performed regularly, and will be most effective when your baby is relaxed. Exercises should never be painful (**see box**).

Positional talipes usually resolves itself in the first few months. If you are concerned that the foot is stiff or not improving, consult your child's doctor or physiotherapist.

Exercises

1. Gently move your baby's foot outwards. This may be held for a few seconds or longer as tolerated.
2. Gently move your baby's foot upwards towards their shin.
3. Gently stroke the outside and front of your baby's foot and lower leg to encourage the foot to move into a normal position.

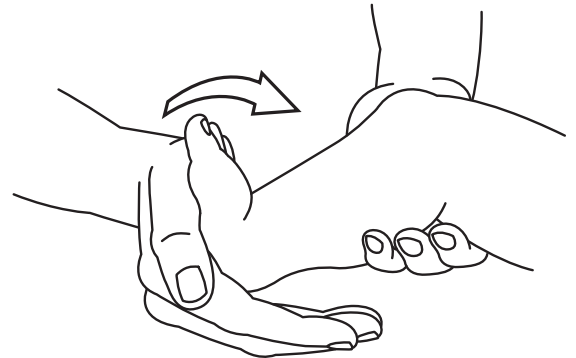


Figure 1. Positional talipes (equino-varus)



Exercise 1. Gently move baby's foot outwards.

Exercise 2. Gently move baby's foot upwards towards the shin.



Exercise 3. Gently stroke the outside and front of baby's foot and lower leg.

