

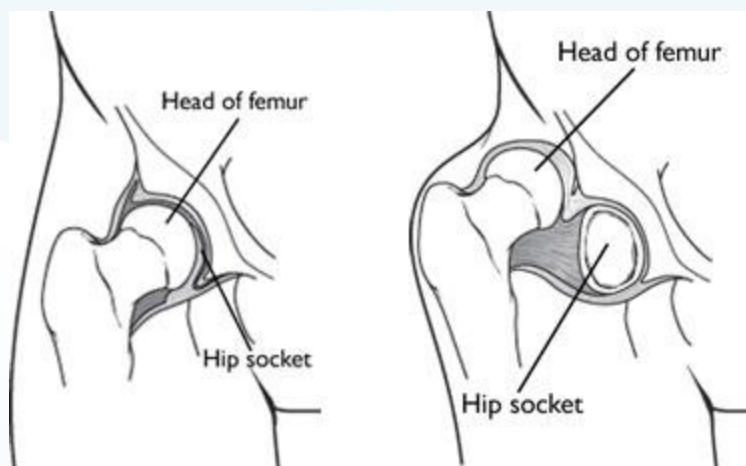
Developmental Dislocation (Dysplasia) of the Hip (DDH)

The hip is a type of ball-and-socket joint. In normal hips, the ball located at the top end of the thighbone (femur) is secured into the socket firmly, which is a component of the large pelvis bone. Children and babies that have developmental dysplasia of the hip has a joint that is not normally formed. The socket can be too shallow, or the ball tends to be loose within the socket, which causes it to become easily dislocated.

Even though the condition might be present at birth, it could also present in the first year of the child's life. Recent studies show that babies who have their legs tightly swaddled with their knees and hips straight are at an increased risk of developing this condition after they are born. As swaddling increases in popularity, parents need to learn how they can safely swaddle their infants. Understanding this will help the parent to make sure they make an informed decision on how to swaddle their little one. The last thing you want is a problem like DDH to develop for something that could have been prevented.

Hip Anatomy

Ligaments hold the hip joint together. The ball (femoral head) is at the top of the thighbone (femur). The socket (acetabulum) is a part of the pelvis. The head nestles snugly into the acetabulum to create the hip joint. The joint is held securely in place with the joint capsule and surrounding ligaments.



How to Treat Developmental Dislocation of the Hip:

1. Newborns

Babies are placed into a soft device, known as the Pavlik harness, for a month or two to keep their thighbone in its socket. The brace is designed to hold the child's hip in proper position while allowing free range of movement for the legs to facilitate diaper changes. The harness tightens the ligaments that surround the joint and return the hip to its normal formation.

2. Children Ages 1-6 Months

Treatment here is similar to that of newborns where the thighbone is repositioned into its socket with the harness. Most of the time, this method proves to be quite successful, even when the hips are completely dislocated. The harness is worn full-time for the first six weeks and then part-time for another six weeks.

3. Children Ages 6 Months to 2 Years

Older babies and children are often treated with spica casting and closed reduction. In the majority of cases, skin traction is used for the first few weeks before it is repositioned to the thighbone.

Other Information:

- DDH tends to run in families.
- First-born children and girls are more prone to this condition than that of boys.
- Babies that are born in the breech position tend to be more prone to this condition than those born head first.
- Parents and siblings that have this condition make it more susceptible to others in the family having the same condition.
- Low levels of amniotic fluid attribute to this condition in babies.