

Positional Talipes Fact Sheet

Updated April 2026



Steps is the leading charity working for all those whose lives are affected by childhood lower limb conditions

What is positional talipes/positional clubfoot?



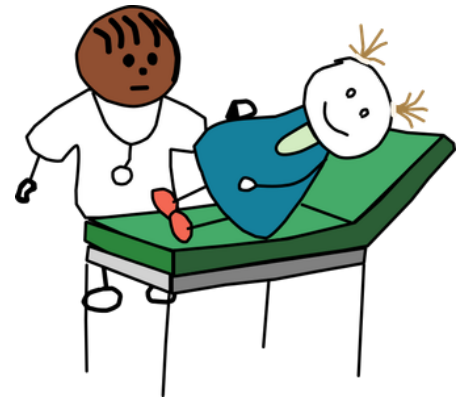
Positional talipes or positional clubfoot, is a common temporary presentation of the foot in newborn babies where a baby's foot (or feet) turns inwards and downwards. The foot is not 'stuck' in this position however, and will have a full range of movement. Positional talipes is not the same as congenital talipes equinovarus (also known as CTEV or 'true' clubfoot) which requires treatment and long term monitoring, but it may look similar. It is important not to assume a diagnosis, and you should seek further advice from your doctor if the position persists beyond six weeks to rule out an underlying structural problem.

Why does it happen?

It is thought to be caused by the baby's position in the womb in the later stages of pregnancy and is known as a 'packaging' disorder. Packaging disorders occur during pregnancy when the foetus is 'packaged' too tightly within the uterus. As a baby grows, they will start to run out of space and sometimes the feet get a little squashed out of shape as a result. The foot will have been resting in the womb in an awkward position and may become temporarily stuck this way.

How is it diagnosed?

Positional talipes is easy to spot when a baby is born. A gentle examination of the foot by an orthopaedic doctor soon after birth will confirm a diagnosis.



How is it treated?

Formal medical treatment is not required with positional talipes. You may be taught some gentle stretches before you leave hospital and these should be done little and often.

You will gradually notice the feet improve and correct when stimulated, though babies do tend to rest with their feet turned inwards and downwards.

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How will this affect my child?

A baby will usually grow out of positional talipes in a few weeks and will not require follow up treatment. The foot can take up to 12 weeks to look completely 'normal'.

There will be no long-term effects on mobility or walking.

If the position of your baby's foot does not start to improve within around six weeks you should ask for advice from your doctor or health visitor, as they may need to be examined again. Any further treatment will depend on your baby's individual presentation.



Support

Steps is here to help

Contact Steps: +44 (0) 1925 750271 to answer any practical questions you have.

Email: Info@steps-charity.org.uk with questions.

Family Contact Service: If you want to talk to someone who has been through a similar situation, one on one.

Facebook Group: A closed group where you can talk about your worries, share helpful tips, and find emotional support.

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