

# FACT SHEET

## Developmental Dysplasia of the Hip

### What Is Developmental Dysplasia of the Hip (DDH)?

Your hip is the biggest ball-and-socket joint in your body. The ball of your thigh bone fits into the socket of your pelvis to form your hip joint. If your hips are normal, the ball rotates freely in the socket to let you move.

But if you have dysplasia, your hip socket doesn't completely cover the ball of your thigh bone, causing your hip joint to easily dislocate.

It can also wear your hip joint out faster than normal. Imagine a tyre that's out of balance on a car. The tread on that tyre will wear out sooner than it would if it were properly aligned.

Most people who have hip dysplasia are born with it, and it is a developmental and ongoing process that is variable in how it presents.

Hip dysplasia can run in families and it happens more often in girls than boys. In babies the hip joint is made of soft cartilage when you're born. Over time, it hardens into bone.

The ball and socket help mold each other during this time, so if the ball isn't fitting properly into the socket, the socket may end up too shallow and not form completely over the ball or the round ball head may be misshapen.

### Signs of hip dysplasia may include:

- > One leg appearing shorter than the other and be turned out
- > The folds of the skin of the thigh and under the buttocks may be uneven
- > Clicking

If you are concerned please get an assessment by our physiotherapist to determine if further tests will be required.

Treatment will depend on your child's age and severity but often a Pavlik harness will be fitted or a spica cast. Early detection is important and will often avoid the need for later surgery.

