



When to seek medical advice:

- If the baby's foot is stiff or not fully correctable.
- If the baby's foot seems painful.
- If the baby's foot position has not improved or resolved within a few months.
- Please speak to your health visitor or GP who can refer your baby to the Acute Paediatric Physiotherapy Department for further assessment and advice, if required. Babies with calcaneovalgus feet are routinely referred for a hip ultrasound scan, which should be performed when they are 6 weeks old.
- Please speak to your health visitor or GP if you have not received an appointment for a hip ultrasound scan or if you have any concerns about your baby's hips.

Other physio advice:

- In the first 2 months of life your baby will spend an average of 700 hours sleeping. If a baby always lies in the same position (facing the same way) it can alter the baby's head shape, causing asymmetrical flattening of the skull (plagiocephaly).
- Please ensure that your baby sleeps on its back, but alternate which side it turns its head towards.
- When your baby is awake, daily supervised tummy time is great for building the muscles your baby needs for sitting and crawling. It also helps to promote a more rounded head shape.

What is a calcaneovalgus foot?

- Calcaneovalgus is a common foot condition in newborn babies that may affect one or both feet.
- A calcaneovalgus foot rests upwards and outwards, with the toes almost against the shin.
- The foot remains mostly flexible and can be gently moved through a normal range of movement. Sometimes there may be tightness when stretching the foot downwards, to a pointed position.
- The condition is thought to be caused by some muscle tightness around the ankle, and the baby's position while in the mother's uterus.
- It is not caused by problems with the bones in the foot.

How is a calcaneovalgus foot managed?

- A calcaneovalgus foot is a temporary condition.
- It will usually resolve itself within the first few months. Once the baby is born it will have more space to move and stretch its feet. Give your baby some time out of their clothes to allow them to kick and move their legs freely.

- Make sure baby's clothes are not too tight around their feet so they have room to move and stretch.
- Bath time is a good time for a baby to stretch.

Can exercise help?

- Gentle exercises for the foot may help.
- These should be performed regularly through the day and will be most effective when your baby is relaxed.
- Hold each stretch for 10-30 secs, as tolerated.
- Exercises should never be painful or forced.

Exercise 1

Gently move baby's foot inwards to a neutral position



Exercise 2

Gently move baby's foot downwards, stretching across the top of the foot

