

**Patient
Information**

Ponseti method

Instructions for parents

Introduction

This leaflet gives you information about the Ponseti method used to treat Congenital Talipes Equinovarus (CTEV) also known as club foot. You and your baby will usually be seen by a member of the Orthopaedic team within the first 2 weeks after birth.

What is the Ponseti method?

The Ponseti method is a treatment used to correct a foot abnormality. The treatment involves gently moving the foot (manipulation) to stretch the soft tissues and correct the bony alignment of the foot. The foot is held in place with a plaster cast. Each plaster cast is left on for about a week. This allows enough time for the muscles and ligaments to relax and for the bones to grow into the correct position.

What happens next?

When you attend for an outpatients appointment the plaster will be removed. Your baby will be examined before the foot is positioned again. A new plaster is put on to hold the next position.

How many times does the plaster have to be reapplied?

This can vary but may take 8 to 10 plasters.

How can I help?

It may help your baby to relax during the procedure if you bring a feed or a dummy which you can give while the manipulation and plastering is being done.

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Department

Trauma &
Orthopaedics

Review due

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Will my child need an operation?

Most babies (80 out of 100) will need a small day case operation called a tenotomy to complete the correction of the foot. The need for this will be decided midway through the casting stage of treatment. The tendon at the back of the heel will be released. This is usually done under local anaesthetic (while your baby is awake). Your baby's foot and ankle will then be put back into plaster, in the improved position, for 3 weeks. The cast will be changed halfway through this period to allow for growth. If full correction is achieved without needing a tenotomy, your child will remain in the cast, in the fully corrected position, for a further 3 weeks with a change for growth halfway through.

Next stage

After the plaster is removed, your baby will be fitted with specially made boots that are joined together by a metal bar. These will be measured and fitted by the orthotist. The bar will hold the feet in the correct position.

Some parents find this stage of the treatment difficult. If you have concerns, please contact the staff in the Plaster Room. The contact details are at the end of this leaflet.

Evidence has shown that children who do not wear the boots and bar will have problems with their foot. In some cases this can lead to the child having surgery.

The boots and bar must be worn all of the time, including night time, for 3 months. You can remove the boots and bar for a maximum of half an hour a day in order to bath your baby.

After 3 months, your child will only need to wear the boots and bar when they are asleep (including daytime naps). Your child must wear the boots and bar when sleeping until they are about 4 years old. During the day, your child should wear well fitted shoes.

If the full course of treatment is not completed, some children may need tendon surgery between the ages of 1 and 3 years.

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- Check that your baby's toes are pink and warm at every nappy change
- Check your baby's skin around the edges of the plaster for any signs of the plaster rubbing; for example redness
- Keep the plaster dry
- Change your baby's nappy frequently to avoid soiling the plaster. Disposable nappies with elasticised legs usually work well
- Try to fit the leg of the nappy above the top of the plaster, to avoid urine leaking under the plaster
- Toes can be kept clean and comfortable by using baby wipes.

You must contact the hospital if:

- you cannot see your baby's toes
- your baby's toes are not pink and warm • the plaster becomes loose, cracks or crumbles
- your baby is crying more than usual and appears to be in pain – this may be because the plaster is rubbing in a non-visible area.

It is important to follow the advice you have been given. If you have any difficulties or questions please contact the staff in the Plaster Room; they will be happy to discuss them with you.

Contact information**Mr Henderson's secretary**

Gloucester Royal Hospital
Tel: 0300 422 6621

Mr Kumar's secretary

Cheltenham General Hospital
Tel: 0300 422 3039

Plaster Room

Cheltenham General Hospital
Tel: 03004 223 148

Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 4:30pm

Gloucestershire Royal Hospital
Tel: 03004 228 411

Monday to Friday, 8:45am to 4:30pm

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Further information

The Ponseti User Group

Tel: 0161 276 1234

Website: www.ponseti.org.uk

Children's Physiotherapy

Tel: 01452 545 928

Steps Worldwide

Tel: 01925 750 271

Website: www.steps-charity.org.uk

Please search for Ponseti method.

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