

# PAVLIK HARNESS

A Guide for Patients

 **oapl.**<sup>TM</sup>



# INTRODUCTION

The harness is designed to maintain your baby's legs in a position with their hips at a right angle to their torso with both knees lying outwards.

This position holds the hip in the most stable position for the hip to form in. This means that the thigh bone (femur) is pushed into the socket (acetabulum).



**Consulting Orthotist**

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**Clinic Attended**

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**Date Attended**

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# FITTING A PAVLIK

The harness should be fitted by an orthotist or orthopaedic surgeon and should be adjusted as your child grows by either an orthotist or the surgeon.

## **Adjusting A Pavlik**

The harness will be fitted with adequate room for your child to breathe deeply and feed, however, as they grow in length and increase in weight the harness will be firm around the chest and may not maintain the hips in an ideal position.

The harness should be fitted with room to place two fingers under the chest strap after a feed. This is best checked every 3-4 days as babies grow rapidly! If you cannot fit two fingers under the strap, either loosen slightly or contact your orthotist for an adjustment.



Take note of the hip position with in the harness. As your child grows the harness may need lengthening to maintain good position. For this reason, do not cut the straps shorter to make them neater. If the straps are very long, fold them into bundles and tape with a band-aid or sticky tape.

# WEARING A PAVLIK

A Pavlik Harness is usually fitted soon after birth and remain on for approximately 12 weeks. Initially the harness remains on 24 hours per day without removal, even when bathing.

As your child progresses, your Orthopaedic Surgeon will indicate when you may remove the harness for bathing and eventually during the day.

The harness can be removed simply by undoing the chest strap and Velcro straps around the legs like a jacket. To reapply slip arms through shoulder straps, reposition legs into foot pieces and re-fasten.

Ensure the chest strap passes the two finger test!



## Cleaning

As the harness cannot be removed, it cannot be washed. You can avoid soiling of the harness by using two nappies well applied for a tight fit around the top of the leg.

It is recommended that a disposable nappy is used beneath a cloth one. Both nappies should pass under both leg straps on both sides to avoid pulling the leg out of position.

Of course accidents do happen so sponging any leaks onto the harness clean is acceptable.



## Positioning Baby

As we are trying to keep the legs apart it is important to be aware of holding your child with their legs parted and lying flat.

Your baby should only sleep on his/her back. Time on their tummy is useful when they are awake to encourage good head and neck control.

A good tip is when you are handling your baby always keep your arm between their legs to keep them apart.



### **Suitable Baby Clothes**

You will find that most of your baby's clothes will fit over the harness with minimal problems. Bigger sized jumpsuits are often the most successful garments to manage for both parents and baby. Socks or booties can be fitted over the foot pieces of the harness.

### **Weighing Your Baby**

A pavlik harness weighs approximately 115g or 3oz. When your baby is weighed remember to account for this additional weight for an accurate record.

### **Progress Reviews**

The Orthotist will routinely review the harness approximately 1 week after fitting. Following this visit, the harness will be reviewed as required.

Please do not hesitate to contact your Orthotist to discuss any concerns or to arrange an appointment to adjust the harness.

# CONTACT DETAILS

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