

Bow Legs and Knock Knees in Children

Information for Parents

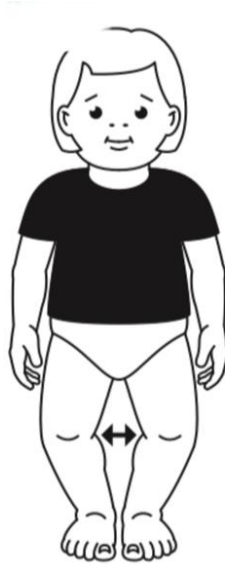
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Bow Legs

Bow legs is the term used to describe an outward curving of the legs. When a child with bow legs stands with their feet and ankles together, their knees stay apart.

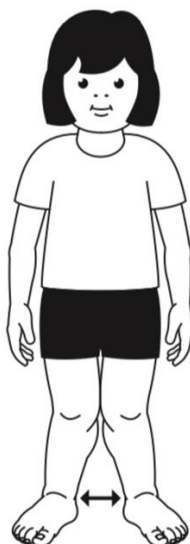


Most children have some bowing of their legs when they start to walk. Their legs gradually straighten out, usually by the time they reach 3 years old and may be followed by a period of time with knock knees.

The medical term for the position at the knees when the legs are bowed is called Genu Varum.

Knock Knees

Knock knees is the term used to describe a large distance between the ankles when the knees are touching.



Knock knees are common in children aged 3 to 5 years. In most children, as they grow, their legs gradually straighten and are usually in a normal position by the time they are 8 to 9 years old.

The medical term for this knee position is Genu Valgum.

Bow legs and knock knees are a normal part of a child's growth.

Most children with bow legs or knock knees do not require treatment and these will correct by themselves over time.

Exercises, splints or special shoes are not recommended.

Contact your child's doctor if:

- Your child's bow legs or knock knees are severe.
- Bow legs persist after 3 years of age.
- Knock knees worsen after 8 years of age.
- Only one leg is affected.
- Your child has pain or a limp.
- Your child is unusually short for their age.

Department: Orthopaedic
Clinic 11 – Telephone 01522 573836

Site: Lincoln County Hospital

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