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This report/letter and any attachments are intended for the individuals named. If you have received it in error please contact us or return to us as soon as possible

Hip spicas

A hip spica is used to keep the hip still to allow for aligned healing and hip development. Hip spicas are treatment options for hip developmental issues, post-surgery and following femur (thigh bone) fractures. It is a long cast that keeps the child's hips in an abducted position, it starts at the trunk and extends down both legs usually. Your clinician will explain how long it will need to be in place when it is applied.

Following cast removal

After several weeks/months in a hip spica cast the child's joint will be quite stiff and they can be wary to move them. This will improve with time. Warm baths will help with the discomfort and encourage the child to start moving their legs again. Gentle movements like bending and straightening the knees, and bringing their legs apart and then together. They will slowly begin to regain their range of movement in time. Do not force any movements that the child is unhappy with.

You might find that initially the child is nervous and apprehensive about moving their legs once the cast is removed, this is completely normal. Encourage them to move their legs as much as they can, lots of reassurance is key and allowing the child time to regain movement without being pressurised. It will come with time and each child will do this at their own pace.

You might find that the child reverts back to previous developmental milestones, such as crawling, bottom shuffling, again this is completely normal. They will start to pull themselves up using furniture in their own time and continue to progress their mobility. Older children who were walking prior to the spica application may find that when they do start taking steps they initially walk with a wider stance and/or limp. This will also improve by encouraging normal activities and lots of play in different positions.

Activities to encourage

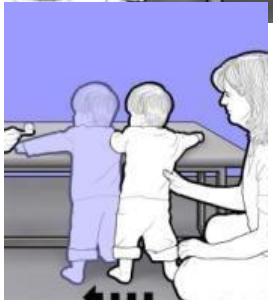
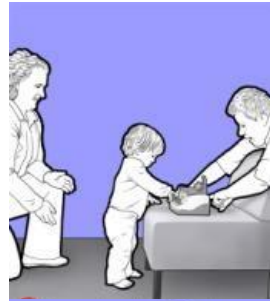
The best way to encourage range of movement, weight bearing, standing and walking is through play. Play is a great distraction tool to make these activities fun, enjoyable and less scary.

As well as encouraging gentle range of movement at the joints, you can get them used to putting some weight and pressure through their legs again. After being in a cast for a long period it is often a strange and unnerving sensation for the child.

You can encourage weight bearing through the legs by sitting on the floor with the child in your lap or on a small bench. Encourage the child to place both feet flat on the floor and reach over their legs for toys etc. as this will help them start to start taking weight through their legs. You can also use some sensory play with a tray of water or foam to splash in at their feet.



Once the child is showing signs of wanting to pull up to stand you can start to encourage sit to stand, standing play, cruising side to side (for example along the sofa) and assisted walking in their play. Allow these activities to be guided by the child.



Key points to take home:

- Encourage gentle movements of the legs once the cast is removed.
- It will take time for the child to walk with a normal pattern once the cast is removed.
- Don't pressurise the child, go at the child's own pace.
- Encourage all activities through play. Make it fun!

Exercises taken from www.physiotherapyexercises.com