WHAT ARE BOW LEGS AND KNOCK KNEES?

Bow leg (genu varum) and knock knee (genu valgum) is an angulation of the knee or leg.

IS THIS NORMAL?:

The normal development for children is for them to be born with bowing of the legs, this being more noticeable when they begin standing and walking.

By the age of two, the legs will become straighter. At the age of three the knee angle may change and knock knees are not uncommon.

By the age of six years the normal angulation of the knees for adulthood has developed.

WHAT DOES THE NURSE PRACTITIONER DO?

The nurse practitioner will check that your child’s knee development is within the range of “normal”. She will make a general orthopaedic assessment of your child’s hip, legs, feet and back. An x-ray of your child’s hips may be performed to check for any abnormalities.

The distance between the knees (bow legs) or ankles (knock knees) will be measured and recorded. This enables us to check for improvements at future outpatients appointments. As parents you may find it useful to take photographs of your child’s legs approximately every 3 months, so you can see the improvement for yourselves.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

The nurse practitioner will determine whether your child falls within the ‘normal’ range and will see them again in the clinic to check that the development of the knee angle is progressing normally.

No treatment is required. Exercises, splints or shoe inserts have been proven not to alter the natural development and outcome.
If you have any concerns or questions, please contact the Nurse Practitioner on 023 8079 4991 or Switchboard on 023 8077 7222 and ask for bleep no. 2641

This leaflet is intended for general advice only, for individual advice please contact your doctor.

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