

DR MICHAEL BELLEMORE

F.R.A.C.S.

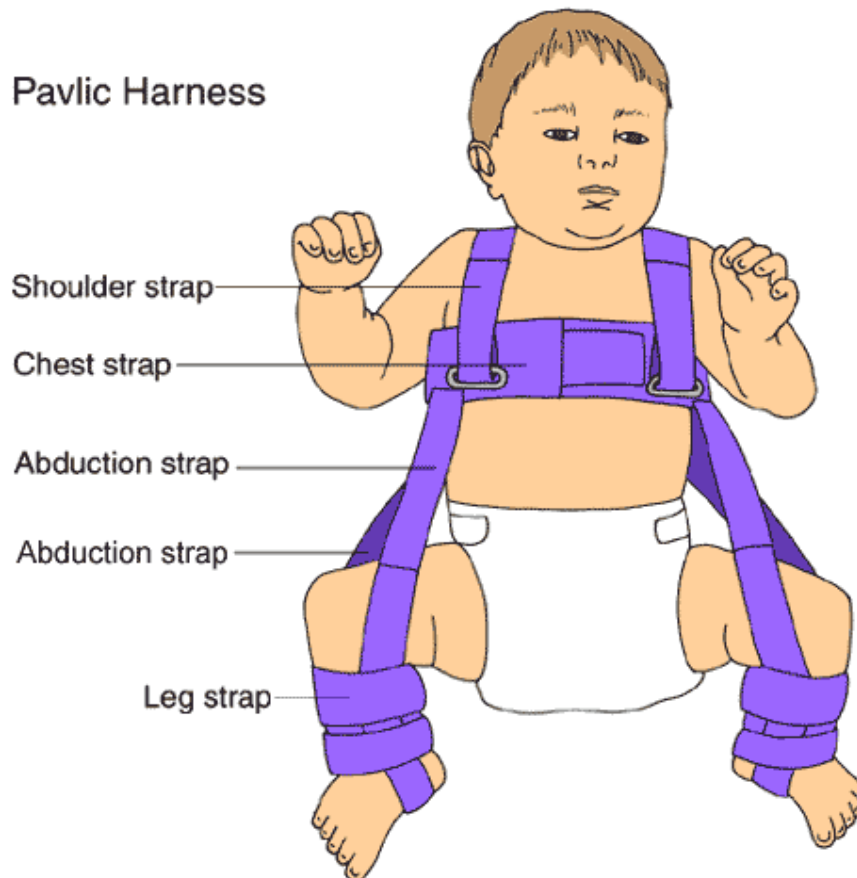
PAEDIATRIC ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEON

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Pavlik Harness Care



The Pavlik Harness is a brace that is mostly used for babies who have a hip disorder. The harness keeps the knees bent (flexed) and legs spread apart (abducted). This position is best to help the hip grow normally. It is advantageous to treat your baby at a young age in order to make the most of the rapid growth and development of your baby's hips at this time.

This treatment is usually very successful and most children grow up to lead a full and active life. Only a very small number of children will need further treatment.

How long?

The harness is worn 24 hours a day. After being shown by Dr Bellemore how to take off the harness and re-apply, it may be taken off once a week only for bathing. The brace is maintained until the hips are developing normally – usually 2-3 months.

Appointments

After your initial visit when the Pavlik harness is applied you will come back 1 week later to be shown how to remove the harness. Appointments will then be made approximately every 4 weeks. Dr Bellemore will monitor your baby's progress by using the ultrasound machine.

How will your baby feel?

Once the harness has been correctly adjusted your baby should not feel any pain or discomfort although your baby may grumble when the harness is first applied. Some babies will be unsettled for a few days. Your baby will however still be able to move his/her hips and knees.

Washing and Skin Care

Daily care - sponge bath only
- check skin creases around your baby's neck, hip and knees. Look for redness. These areas should be kept clean and dry.
Do not apply creams and powders under straps as these may cause skin irritation.

Weekly care - Once shown how to remove the harness you may bathe your baby once a week.

Washing of Harness

Wash only if necessary. Hand washing of the harness is preferred; however it may be machine washed at a low temperature. The harness should be allowed to drip dry. A hair dryer on low heat can be used if necessary.

Nappies

The nappy needs to be threaded under the straps. When changing your baby's nappy place your hand under the baby's buttocks. DO NOT lift your baby by their feet. It is a good idea to check your baby's nappy a little more frequently to avoid any soiling of the harness.

Breastfeeding

Aim for the baby's legs to be spread apart. The exact position is not critical during feeding. It may be necessary to experiment to find the most comfortable position for you and your

baby. Sit your baby on your lap for burping in the usual way. It may take a little longer than usual.

Carrying

It is important to carry your baby in the position encouraged by the harness, i.e. carry your baby in the upright position on your front or side with the legs spread around you. When carrying your baby in the cradle position make sure that the legs are allowed to part.

A baby carrier, such as a Baby Bjorn, encourages an excellent position for your baby's hips.

Weight of harness

Approximately 150 grams

Clothing

DO NOT SWADDLE HIPS

Clothing must not restrict or pull hips inward.

It may be necessary for your baby to wear larger sizes of clothing to accommodate the harness. Avoid tight, restrictive clothing and never apply clothing (except the nappy) between the harness and the skin.

Please note that babies in harnesses are warmer than those without so try to avoid overheating your baby.