

Paediatric Physiotherapy Referral guidance for management of Knock Knees (Genu Valgum) and Bowlegs (Genu Varum)

Knock knees (genu valgum) and bowlegs (genu varum) in children can be a normal part of growth and development. They are both considered to be normal variants.

Most children do not require any treatment for either presentation, and it usually resolves as the child grows and their legs naturally strengthen.

- Knock knees normally resolves by 7 years of age.
- Bowlegs normally resolve by 4 years of age.

Parental anxiety is understandable but there is no evidence to suggest that pain free knock knees or bowlegs will lead to any complications for the child in the future and will likely naturally correct. Physiotherapy is not usually considered helpful for children with knock knees or bowlegs.

Referral not necessary if:

- The child is under 7 years of age (knock knees/genu valgum) or under 4 years of age (bowlegs/genu varum), well, and there are no red flag features.
- There are no pain symptoms.
- There is no functional restriction or impairment
- The deformity is bilateral/symmetrical
- Growing and developing normally / gross motor skills are normal

Management: Universal Offer:

Advise parents that this can be a normal developmental stage which often corrects itself and does not usually cause symptoms.

There is no need for any treatment if there are no symptoms, even if it persists after the ages of 4 years (bowlegs) and 7 years (knock knees).

Direct patient to ELHT Paediatric Physiotherapy Website for future advice and patient information. Advise them to return for review if symptoms develop.

Red flag concerns to be managed by GP or A&E (symptom dependant)

