

Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

If you have a question, compliment, comment or concern please contact our PALS team on 020 7288 5551 or whh-tr.whitthealthPALS@nhs.net

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet please contact us on 020 7288 3182. We will try our best to meet your needs.

Bow legs

A parent's guide

Whittington Health
Magdala Avenue
London
N19 5NF
Phone: 020 7272 3070
www.whittington.nhs.uk

Date published: 16/11/2017
Review date: 16/11/2019
Ref: C&YP/Paed/BL/03

© Whittington Health
Please recycle



Are bow legs common?

Mild bow legs in children is normal. The condition is more common in Afro-Caribbean infants and babies who start to walk at an early age (before they reach one year old).

When should I see a doctor?

At any age, bow legs that have more than five centimetres between the knees (measured with the child lying down) should be assessed by a specialist doctor.

Some children with bow legs have rickets (vitamin D deficiency). If your child does not have extra vitamins in their diet or has a restricted diet, your GP may arrange a blood test and/or an x-ray.

Occasionally, children with bow legs have a waddling walk. If this is the case, your child needs to be assessed by a specialist doctor.

Can bow legs lead to knock knees?

Many infants with bow legs will develop knock knees later on in childhood. The condition will be cured by the time the child reaches around nine years old.