

## Paediatric Orthopaedics

# The boots and bar stage of the Ponseti Technique - frequently asked questions-

### What does this stage of the Ponseti Technique involve?

The final stage of the Ponseti technique involves fitting your child with boots and a metal bar.

At this time, your child's final plaster cast will have been removed. His/her feet and legs might initially look quite swollen but this will settle down once the plaster has been off for a few days.

Babies can become upset when they are first put in the boots and bar, which can make it the most distressing part of the treatment for parents. It is very important, however, to persevere at this stage. If your child doesn't wear the bar and boots, they might need to have further plaster casts or a repeat of the tenotomy surgery.

### Why are the boots and bar important?

The boots and bar hold the feet in the position needed to stop the muscles and ligaments becoming tight again.

### How long will the boots and bar need to be worn?

The boots and bar must be worn for 23 hours per day, for approximately three months. They can only be removed while your child is bathing and dressing (maximum one hour per day). After three months, they just wear them at night and when they are napping. During the day, your child can walk bare foot or wear well-fitting shoes. These boots will need to be worn until your child is about five years old.

### Will my child need any other special equipment or clothing?

Your child can use a normal pram, car seat or high chair. However, these require a detachable strap so that it can be threaded between your child's bar and legs.

During the first three months of the boots and bar stage, if your child is wearing trousers they will need to have poppers or buttons between the legs so that the clothing can be fastened while the bar is in place.

### Who fits the boots and bar?

A member of the team does the first fitting of the boots and bar. You will be shown how to fit them yourself, so that you can continue at home.

### How should the boots be fitted?

The affected foot is fitted first with the boot. Where both feet are affected, it is usual that one foot is less flexible than the other - this foot needs to be fitted first, with the more flexible one fitted last.

Please ensure that your child always wears socks or tights with the boots - this will prevent the feet getting sore.

It is important to make sure that the heel is placed at the very back of the boot and held firmly in place by the tongue of the boot and the heel-retaining strap. Once the heel is in place, the laces can be fastened. The other boot can then be fitted in the same way.

## Who adjusts the boots and bar

The boots are set to a specific angle, which must not be altered by anyone other than a member of the team. They can do this at your regular check ups.

It can be useful to mark with a pen where the toes reach on the boot. If you notice that the toes move back, this usually means that the heel is not flat in the boot and you will have to re-fit the boot(s).

## Will the boots be comfortable?

Your child will probably be upset when the boots are first fitted. From our experience, it is very rare that this is because she/he is in pain. In the majority of children, it is due to the frustration of having both feet attached to the bar.

## How can I encourage my child to accept the boots and bar?

You can help your child accept the boots and bar by introducing playful exercises that teach your child to bend both knees at the same time. We will suggest some that seem to work. The more time that your child spends wearing the boots the sooner she/he will get used to moving both legs together.

If you notice that your child is crying more than usual, please check that the boots are fitted correctly and also check for rubbing or blisters. If you find any blisters, please make an appointment to be seen in the clinic. Blisters can mean the boots are getting too small or that the bar needs to be lengthened.

## How often will my child need to attend clinic?

Usually, you and your child will be asked to return one week after the first fitting of the boots and bar. Then, they will need to attend clinic once a month for the next three months ie while they are wearing them 23 hours per day. Your child will then be reviewed by one of the team every two to three months until the age of about five years, when they can usually stop wearing the boots and bar.

### It is important to contact the hospital if:

- You have difficulty in fitting the boots and/or bar yourself
- You are concerned that your child's skin looks sore
- You think the boots and bar are becoming too small or are damaged
- You are concerned about any other aspect of your child's feet.

It is important to follow all of the above instructions carefully to ensure the treatment is successful. Staff involved in your child's care are happy to answer any queries you have.

## Useful contact numbers:

- The Physiotherapist can be contacted (or bleeped 152 998) via Tel: 01223 245 151
- The Plaster Room Tel: 01223 217 772
- The Consultant Surgeon's (Mr Rehm) secretary Tel: 01223 216 101 (or ext 2101)

If you have any problems outside normal working hours, please take your child to your local Emergency Department and contact one of the Addenbrooke's team as soon as possible.

## National support group

- **STEPS - The National Association for Children with Lower Limb Abnormalities**, Lymm Court, 11 Eagle Brow, Lymm, Cheshire, WA13 0LP; Website: [www.steps-charity.org.uk](http://www.steps-charity.org.uk)

**This document is also available in other languages, large print and audio format upon request – 01223 216032.**

本文件也可應要求，製作成其他語文或特大字體版本，也可製作成錄音帶。

Cantonese

આ દસ્તાવેજ વિનંતી કરવાથી બીજી ભાષાઓ, મોટા છાપેલા અક્ષરો અથવા ઓડિઓ રચનામાં પણ મળી રહેશે.

Gujarati

A richiesta questo documento è anche disponibile in altre lingue, a caratteri grandi e in formato audio.

Italian

ئەم بەلگەییە ھەروەھا بە زمانەکانی کە، بە چاپی درشت و بە شریتی تەسجیل دەس دەکەوێت

Kurdish

درخواست پر یہ دستاویز دیگر زبانوں میں، بڑے حروف کی چھپائی اور سننے والے ذرائع پر بھی میسر ہے۔

Urdu

## Document history

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Contact number	01223 216 101
Published	May 2005
Review date	May 2007
File name	PI 191_Talipes_bootsbar _a4.doc (Word)
Version number	02
Ref	PI 191