

## Safety tips

- Give your baby plenty of chances to move around and don't keep them still for too long.
- Make sure the area is safe and that there are no dangerous objects they can reach.

Avoid baby walkers - Physiotherapists and other health professionals do not recommend using baby walkers. Their reasons are:

1. Safety - Even when you are watching, there are many accidents with baby walkers each year.
2. Delayed Development - Studies show that baby walkers don't help babies learn to walk. Baby walkers can cause babies to walk on their toes, which may continue as they grow.

## Contact details:



◀ Please scan the QR code for our website

To read this leaflet in a different language, please visit our website: [www.uhd.nhs.uk/visit/patient-information-leaflets](http://www.uhd.nhs.uk/visit/patient-information-leaflets) and use the language and accessibility function available along the top of the site.

To ask for this leaflet in larger print, please contact the patient experience team on **0300 019 8499** or email [patientexperienceteam@uhd.nhs.uk](mailto:patientexperienceteam@uhd.nhs.uk).

The Royal Bournemouth Hospital,  
Castle Lane East, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH7 7DW

Poole Hospital,  
Longfleet Road, Poole, Dorset, BH15 2JB

Christchurch Hospital,  
Fairmile Road, Christchurch, Dorset, BH23 2JX

Author: **Tori McGregor** and **Elen Clee** Date: **April 2025** Version: **One**  
Review date: **April 2028** Ref: **010/25**

w: [www.uhd.nhs.uk](http://www.uhd.nhs.uk)

@UHD\_NHS @UHDDTrust @uhd\_nhs

# Information for parents and carers

## Promoting Physical Development

## Sitting to Walking



## Acute Paediatric Physiotherapy Department

Babies grow and learn at different speeds.  
The tips in this guide can help babies develop  
their movement skills.

w: [www.uhd.nhs.uk](http://www.uhd.nhs.uk)

@UHD\_NHS @UHDDTrust @uhd\_nhs



## Learning to stand and walk

For babies to stand and walk, they first need to understand their body. This begins when they are very young.

Help babies reach for their feet when they are lying down or sitting. Let them play with their feet.

Get babies used to different textures on their feet, or by letting them feel things like carpet, grass, or sand.

## Encouraging standing

As babies develop they may begin to play in kneeling positions. This helps their leg and tummy muscles grow stronger, which is needed for standing.



You can help babies move into a half-kneeling position. Support their hips, and gently help them shift their weight to the front leg. Let them try to push up with the front leg until they can stand.

## Helping babies take weight through their legs



- Sit on the floor with your legs crossed. Have your baby sit on your lap with their knees bent and feet flat on the floor
- Encourage your baby to lean forward to grab toys. Progress to reaching down to get toys from the floor.

## Helping babies pull to stand

- Sit on the floor in front of a low table or sofa, with your legs crossed. Put your baby on your lap with their feet flat on the floor and their knees bent.
- Put a toy on the table or sofa, and encourage your baby to reach for it. Help them move their hips forward until they can stand.

Some babies might try to stand with their bottom behind their feet. If that happens, help them move their hips forward so they are standing correctly. You can also teach them to sit down gently by guiding their hips back onto your lap.



## Cruising along furniture

Once your child can stand on their own, encourage them to walk along the sofa or a small table while holding on for support with fun objects on both sides of the sofa to make it more interesting for them.



## Stepping between furniture

Place a small, stable table next to the sofa. Put a toy or snack on the table for your child to step towards it. As your child gets better at stepping, make the gap a little bigger. This will help their balance and increase their confidence.

