

In the first twelve months of life, the legs naturally bow outward. The legs begin to straighten as the baby grows. By age four, it is common to see the child become knock-kneed and then by age seven to ten the legs become straight again.

A family history of bowed legs is common. In other cases the bowing may be due to an abnormality of the growth plate at the top of the shin bone (tibia) at the knee, infection, or a specific condition. Your doctor will explain the cause to you. If the bowing is not equal on both legs, or if your child is older than 24 months, your doctor may want to do an xray of the legs. This will help determine if treatment is necessary. Occasionally this condition may require treatment to prevent future problems.

What is the Treatment for Bowed Legs?

The treatment will probably be observation for bowing that occurs as part of development. You may want to take a picture of your child standing and several months later take another picture to compare the straightening process. For other causes of bowing a treatment may be bracing or, when the child is older, surgery.

Facts about Bowed Legs

- Early walking does not always cause bowed legs
- Bowing that occurs as part of development does not require bracing or surgery
- Bowed legs will not affect your child's ability to walk, run or play