

Patient information

Guided growth surgery in children

Children's bones grow from the ends. Occasionally a growth problem may occur. Parents might notice that their child's legs are not straight, with abnormal bowing or knock knees affecting one or both legs (figure 1). Guided growth surgery may be helpful to correct these problems.

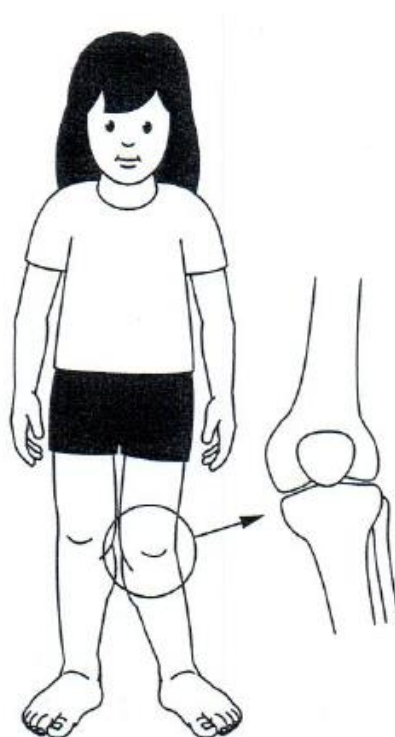


Figure 1: Growth problem affecting the left leg

Through a small incision, and with the child under general anaesthetic, a small metal device called an eight-Plate (figure 2) is placed across the growth area on one side of the bone. This temporarily slows the growth at that site (figure 3). With time and natural growth (around three months to one year) the bone grows straight.



Figure 2: eight-Plate

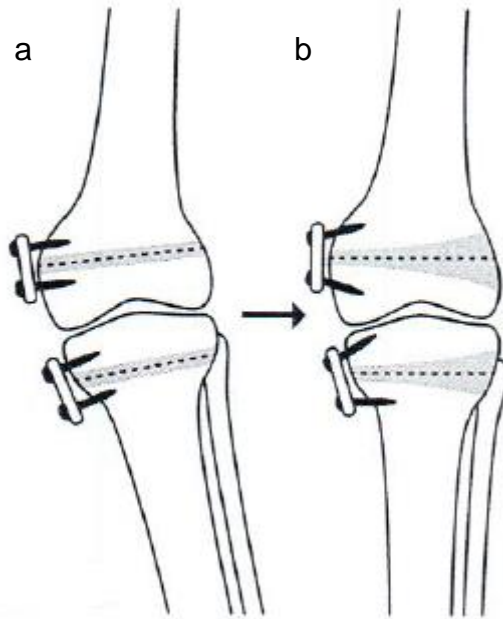


Figure 3: (a) eight-Plate across the growth area of bone
(b) bone straightens with growth

A cast is not required after surgery. The child generally goes home on the same day and may need crutches for a few days. Sports can be played after a few weeks once the wound is healed.

An orthopaedic surgeon will monitor the child's progress by examination and the occasional X-ray. Because the eight-Plate is altering growth, regular follow-up at the clinic is important. Failure to attend could result in further problems. The eight-Plate will be removed once the problem is correct.

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<http://www.disabledgo.com/organisations/west-suffolk-nhs-foundation-trust/main>