



# Clinodactyly

## What is clinodactyly?

Clinodactyly means that your child has a finger that is curved to one side. It usually affects the little (pinky) finger but can affect other fingers as well. It is typically caused by abnormal growth and development of the small bones of the finger.

## How common is clinodactyly?

Clinodactyly is a common condition. It is not known exactly how many people have it. About 10% of children are affected by clinodactyly to some degree. It tends to happen more to boys than girls.

Having clinodactyly in both hands is common.

## What causes clinodactyly?

Clinodactyly can be inherited (passed on from parent to child) and may be part of a related condition. For example, many children with Down syndrome have clinodactyly.

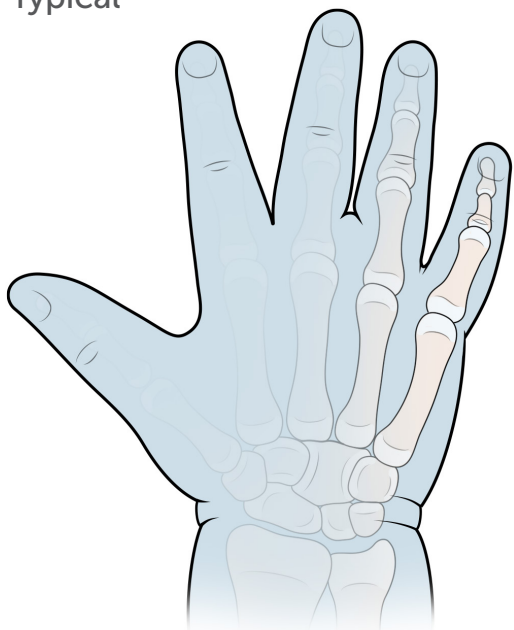
In many cases, clinodactyly happens because the **middle phalanx**, which is the middle of the 3 small finger bones, is shaped like a triangle or trapezoid, called a "delta phalanx". Instead of a single growth plate at one end of the bone, the delta phalanx can have a curved growth plate or more than one growth plate

As the hand grows, the angle of the delta phalanx gets bigger, and the finger appears more curved.

## How is clinodactyly diagnosed?

Clinodactyly is diagnosed by your child's doctor after talking about your child's medical history and doing a careful physical examination. Your child will also have an X-ray.

### Typical



## How is clinodactyly treated?

If your child has a mild finger curve, it will probably not cause pain or problems with function. Surgery is probably not needed for these mild curves.

Abnormalities in the growth of the finger is often the reason for clinodactyly, so it is important for your child to be followed closely by their physician as they grow to watch for more changes.

Surgery may be recommended if the curve gets worse or if the finger curves to the point where it gets in the way of your child's hand movement.

### Surgery

There are two main types of surgery for clinodactyly:

#### Physiolysis

This procedure is done in very young children who have a delta phalanx causing a worsening curve in the finger. The abnormal growth plate in the delta phalanx is taken out, allowing the finger to grow more normally.

#### Osteotomy

This procedure is typically done in younger children if they have a more severe curve, or in older children and teenagers who are having functional issues due to the curved bone. In an osteotomy procedure, the curved bone is cut and straightened. It is generally held in place with pins and a cast until the bone is healed, to grow more normally.

Surgery is usually successful in fixing the curve, but there is a risk that the curve will come back and your child may need another surgery.

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