**Dwarfism**

**Summary:**

**Restricted growth, sometimes known as dwarfism, is a condition characterised by unusually short height.**

There are 2 main types of restricted growth:

* **proportionate short stature (PSS)** – a general lack of growth in the body, arms and legs
* **disproportionate short stature (DSS)** – where the arms and legs are particularly short

As well as being short, some people with restricted growth also have other physical problems, such as bowed legs or an unusually curved spine.

But most people don't have any other serious problems and are able to live a relatively normal life, with a normal life expectancy.

**Symptoms:**

Some people with restricted growth (dwarfism) have health problems. But for many, the only sign is short height.

**PSS**

People with proportionate short stature (PSS) grow very slowly and have a general lack of growth throughout the body. The body, legs and arms are all shorter than normal.

PSS may not be noticeable until later in childhood or puberty. Any other symptoms the person has will depend on the underlying cause of PSS.

**DSS**

In people with disproportionate short stature (DSS), the arms and legs are particularly short. People with achondroplasia, one of the most common causes of DSS, typically have:

* a normal-length body with short arms and legs
* a large head with a prominent forehead and flat nasal bridge
* short and wide hands and feet
* short fingers and toes

Some people with achondroplasia also have:

* bowed legs, which may cause ankle or knee pain
* an abnormally curved spine (kyphosis) or (scoliosis)
* a build-up of fluid around the brain (hydrocephalus)
* repeated ear infections, which can cause hearing difficulties
* irregular breathing at night (sleep apnoea), which can interrupt sleep and cause excessive sleepiness during the day
* numbness and weakness in the legs, caused by compression of the nerves in the spine

**Strategies:**

Making commonly used items accessible i.e. low shelves

Ergonomically suitable chairs and desks

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/restricted-growth/>