

Dwarfism

Frequently asked questions...

1. **Why are you small?** I have dwarfism so I grow more slowly than you.
2. **What is dwarfism?** It is a condition which affects how fast my bones grow. Particularly my arms and legs. Because they grow slower than yours, I am shorter than you.
3. **Why do you have dwarfism?** It is just the way I am made. The recipe which makes us who we are is unique for each of us. These recipes make everyone different. Some of us have brown hair, some blonde, some of us have pink skin, others have brown skin, some of us are very tall, others have dwarfism. If we were all the same life would be very dull!
4. **Are your family small too?** No. Most people with dwarfism are the only ones in their family who are short. Their parents and siblings are about the same height as your parents and siblings (we call this average height).
5. **How tall will you get?** An adult will be about 4 feet tall.
6. **Does dwarfism affect your brain?** No. It is a condition which affects how fast my bones grow. It does not affect how clever I am or how I learn things.
7. **How do you reach things average height people like me do?** Using step ups, reaching tools and a whole heap of determination and ingenuity! There is not much someone with restricted growth cannot overcome, given a few tools and a bit of creativity!
8. **Is there anything you cannot do?** Grow faster! On a more practical note activities like trampolining should be avoided as I am more likely to hurt my spinal cord on them than an average person.
9. **What sort of job will you do?** Pretty much anything! Most people with dwarfism live full and active lives as professionals contributing to society, sport and culture in many ways.
10. **What do I call your condition?** "Restricted growth" , "having dwarfism" or "short-statured" are all fine. Please don't use the word "midget" it is considered offensive among those with restricted growth.
11. **Is dwarfism rare?** - Achondroplasia is the most common form of dwarfism happening in about one in every 20,000 births.
12. **Can the doctors make you better?** No. There is no cure for most forms of dwarfism. Human growth hormone does not work on the most common form of dwarfism.

13. **What can I do to help you?** Treat me as you would like to be treated. Understand that I might need to do things a little differently to you (like using a step up to reach things). If I need help with things I'll ask – like asking you to please open a door for me if I cannot reach a handle.
14. **What should I not do?** Do not assume because I am little that I am a baby or less intelligent than you. Do not pat me on the head or pick me up - would you like it? Do not jostle me in the playground or on the stairs. Just give yourself the chance to get to know me for who I am rather than the condition I have.

15. **Where can I get more information?** There are a couple of organisations which can help with more information:

The Restricted Growth Organisation (RGA):

www.restrictedgrowth.co.uk

RGA Helpline

0300 111 1970

Please leave a message and we will get back to you as soon as we can.

Office Address

PO Box 5137

Yeovil, BA20 9FF

office@restrictedgrowth.co.uk

Dwarf Sports Association (DSA)

www.dsauk.org/

Telephone: 01246 296 485

Dwarf Sports Association UK

PO Box 4269

Dronfield, UK

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