

## Shoe lacing

Many children and young people with hemiplegia have difficulty in tying their shoelaces. Here are just some ideas that might help.

### **Velcro**

Shoes with Velcro fastenings are obviously one of the best solutions. Velcro-fastened shoes and trainers for younger children are widely available, and some physiotherapy departments in conjunction with the orthotist will replace existing fastenings with Velcro straps. A few parents, however, have mentioned that this can look rather strange unless it is well done. Pedro boots and other special shoes, which many children obtain through their physiotherapists, can be ordered with Velcro fastenings. Bear in mind, however, that as your child grows it becomes more difficult to buy footwear with Velcro fastening and the child may reject it as being 'different'. Sooner or later you need to tackle the shoelace problem head-on!

### **Coiler shoelaces**

These stretchy, 'curly' laces are used as a fashion accessory by many children. The child puts on the shoe, pulls them tight and they stay tight although they are not actually tied. The shoelaces have no pressure points and allow natural movement. HemiHelp sell Coiler shoelaces in our online shop for £5 a pair. Click on the 'shop' link on our website or type the following into your browser:

[http://www.hemihelp.org.uk/support\\_us/shop/coiler\\_shoelaces](http://www.hemihelp.org.uk/support_us/shop/coiler_shoelaces)

### **Other ideas**

- No bow lacing device - £4.19 for 2 pairs plus £1.95 p&p and Elastic laces (varying prices depending on length). Chestercare, Sidings Road, Low Moor Estates, Kirkby in Ashfield, Notts NG17 7JZ Tel: 01623 757955
- Ordinary 1/8 inch Elastic. Available from most haberdashery shops.
- Laces. If a child finds it difficult to learn to tie laces, it is worth experimenting with different types. Some children find flat laces easier than round ones, some find round ones easier. In general, the thicker the lace, the easier it is to tie.

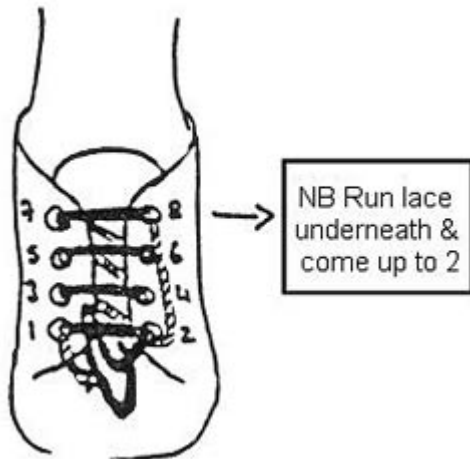
### **Lacing with one hand**

If the child can only use one hand or finds it difficult to reach his/her feet, there are several ways of tying laces single-handed. We list four such methods below, with diagrams. You may find you need a longer lace than the type supplied. But it is not

necessary to use a conventional lace: strong string or stool cord is just as efficient if a lace of the right length is not available. The numbers indicate the direction in which the lace should be threaded. For all these methods, only one end of the lace is threaded down or up the shoe and then tied. The other end is secured in position with a knot.

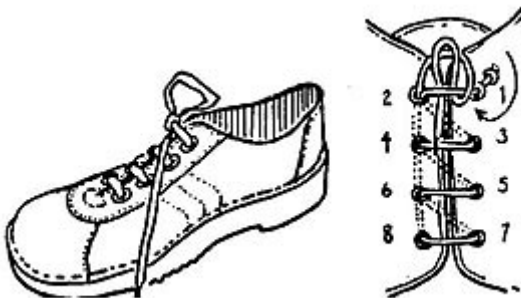
### Method A

- Secure the knotted end at 1. Thread the other end down 2, up 3 and so on to 8. Thread 8 up through 2
- To tighten lace. Work up from the toe and pull at 2. Make a loop in the end, pass under 1, 2 and pull tight.



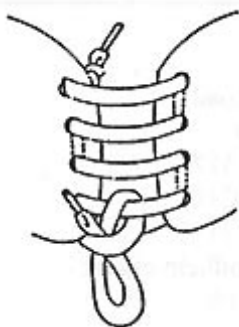
NB: Run lace underneath and come up to 2.

### Method B



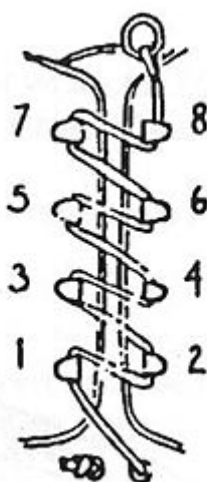
This is A in reverse. You lace from the top towards the toe. Pull the lace back up through 2 and secure as shown in diagram.

### Method C



This is the simplest method. Lace up from the toe and secure as shown in diagram.

### Method D



Hook method. Start by attaching a ring to the unknotted end of the lace. Lace in the direction of the numbers and fix by hooking the ring attached to the end of the lace on to one of the ski-boot hooks.

To loosen, unhook the lace. If the boot has an ordinary eyelet at the bottom the fixing knot can be threaded through this. Some open-to-toe boots have holes in the base of the tongue and the lace can be fastened through these. This holds up the tongue and keeps the knot on the surface where it cannot rub the toes.

*HemiHelp has a range of leaflets covering many of the areas touched on above, and also a Useful Names and Addresses List to help you contact other organisations.*

### HemiHelp

Camelford House,  
89 Albert Embankment  
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Helpline: 0845 123 2372  
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Admin: 0845 120 3713

Fax: 0845 120 3723  
Email: [support@hemihelp.org.uk](mailto:support@hemihelp.org.uk)  
[www.hemihelp.org.uk](http://www.hemihelp.org.uk)

Charity No: 1085349

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Last updated February 2008