

Toe Walking Information Sheet

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Many children walk on tip toes and this can be a part of their normal development. It is more common in boys and it can sometimes be seen in several family members. It is common for children of 10-18 months of age to walk on tip toes when they are learning to walk as it can help with their balance. Some children can continue this up to the age of 6-7 years where it usually resolves naturally. However, a small number of children may continue to walk this way as they get older.

The cause of toe walking is usually unknown and is possibly due to habit from a young age. However it may be due to other reasons which could benefit from further assessment by a health or medical professional. Your GP will be able to advise whether this is needed.

What problems may occur?

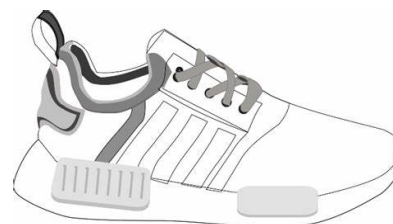
Walking on tip toes does not generally cause the child any pain or discomfort and it does not result in any type of deformity. However, it may cause tightening of the calf muscle and shortening of the Achilles tendon which can lead to the child being unable to put their heel to the ground.

Children who toe walk are usually able to walk, run and jump without any problems.

Footwear

Good fitting supportive footwear can help. Certain shoes may encourage your child to walk with their heels down, such as:

- Boots that support around the ankle make it more difficult to push up onto toes.
- Shoes with a wedged heel, higher on the back at the sole to help the heel reach the floor.



Recommendations

Encourage your child to achieve heel contact with the floor as much as possible.

To prevent them getting tight muscles you can encourage them to:

- Practise walking on their heels (like a penguin)
- Stretch out their calf muscles as shown below

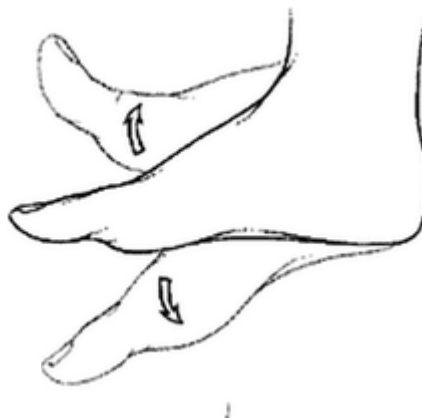


When to seek further advice?

Sometimes further treatment is required if your child's muscles have shortened. Signs of this include:
They are:

- Unable to stand with their heels touching the floor
- Unable to achieve a neutral position (90°) at their ankle

Neutral position(90°)



If you do observe either of these then attempt the recommended stretches for at least six weeks. If there is no improvement then seek a referral to physiotherapy from your GP.

For more information contact

Paediatric Physiotherapists at the Newberry Child Development Centre

Telephone: 01493 661424

Feedback

We want your visit to be as comfortable as possible. Please talk to the person in charge if you have any concerns. If the ward/department staff are unable to resolve your concern, please ask for our Patient Advice and Liaison (PALS) information. Please be assured that raising a concern will not impact on your care. **Before you leave the hospital you will be asked to complete a Friends and Family Test feedback card.** Providing your feedback is vital in helping to transform NHS services and to support patient choice.

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The hospital can arrange for an interpreter or person to sign to assist you in communicating effectively with staff during your stay. Please let us know.

For a large print version of this leaflet, contact PALS 01493 453240