

# Toe walking in children

Most children begin to walk between the ages of 10 to 20 months. Some children begin to walk with their tip toes instead of having their feet flat on the ground. This normally resolves itself within the first year of learning to walk, and is usually gone by the age of three years.

## Idiopathic toe walking

Idiopathic toe walking is when a child continues to walk on their tip toes when they are older than three years of age.

This is usually caused by tight heel cords (Achilles tendon) which prevent the feet to stay flat when walking, despite being able to stand with feet flat on the floor. Other causes need to be excluded by your orthopaedic specialist or physiotherapist.

## Treatments

Idiopathic toe walking in children is not a serious condition and often resolves itself.

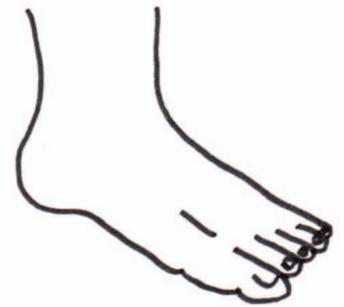
Your orthopaedic specialist or physiotherapist may give you calf stretches and exercises to help stretch the tight heel cords. Other treatments may include repeated casting of the feet and ankles, bracing or a combination of both.

Surgical options to lengthen the Achilles tendons may be suggested in older children and can be discussed with your orthopaedic surgeon or physiotherapist.

Some children respond well to simple treatment but can relapse when they grow quickly, and repeat treatment is then needed.

## Summary

- > Toe walking is common in children who begin walking and usually resolves by the age of three years.
- > Casting, bracing and other surgical options can be discussed with your orthopaedic specialist or physiotherapist.



*This fact sheet is intended to assist, not replace discussion with your doctor or health care professional. It is intended as a guide only. SA Health do not accept any responsibility and will not be liable for any inaccuracies, omissions, information perceived as misleading, or the success of any treatment regimen detailed in this fact sheet.*

## For more information

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