



## TOE WALKING

Toe walking is the walking up on the toes or the ball of both feet. Toe walking is a normal walking pattern of very young children. Often there is a family history of toe walking. Persistence of toe walking could be due to a bad habit, tight heel cords, or in some cases it could be indicative of a more serious problem.

For children with mild contractures (tightened heel cords), active stretching and/or physical therapy may be required. For more serious problems casting, the use of braces (AFO's), or surgery may be necessary.

If toe walking is persistent and or constant past the age of 2 years, you should consult with your child's pediatrician. A complete evaluation may be necessary to identify possible causes and/or determine the need for a referral to a specialist /physician.

### The following are some ideas to promote walking with heels down:

If you have your infant in an exercise saucer, make sure that the position is low enough that the child's feet can rest flat on the floor with knees slightly bent.

When a child is first walking, going barefoot or having them wear socks with grippers versus shoes is best, as this allows the muscles in the feet to develop.

Older children (age 3 and up) who continue toe walking should wear high top shoes, as this will make toe walking more difficult.

Encourage your child to practice walking on their heels and make sure that their feet do not turn outward. Stretching of the calf muscles would also be beneficial. Please consult with your health care practitioner for stretching specifics.

Website: [www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/toe-walking/basics/definition/con-20](http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/toe-walking/basics/definition/con-20)

### References:

LeCras, S., Bouck, J., Brausch, S., Taylor-Haas, A. (2011) Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center: Evidenced-based Clinical Care Guideline for Management of Idiopathic Toe Walking

