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Intoeing

What is intoeing?

Intoeing is a condition where a person's toes turn inward when standing or walking instead of pointing straight ahead. It is a common problem for infants and young children.

What causes intoeing?

The cause may be a problem with your child's feet, their lower or upper legs.

The feet – metatarsus adductus

The front of the foot curves inwards and the whole foot is completely flexible. You may notice this at birth or in the first early months. It can affect one or both feet and is probably caused by your baby's position when in the womb. I

The lower legs – internal tibial torsion

The intoeing may be caused by excessive inward twist of the shin bone (tibia). This becomes noticeable when your child begins walking. The cause is probably due to your baby's position when in the womb.

The upper legs – femoral anteversion

There is an excessive twist in the thigh bone (femur) which causes the whole of the lower leg to turn inward. It is more common in children between the ages of three to six years.

Possible problems

You will notice that your child often trips and appears to be clumsy. This problem is caused by the way their feet or leg bones are positioned.

Treatment options

The odds are that an intoeing gait will reduce with age and that few adults are seen to intoe.

- Changing sitting and/or sleeping postures.
- Exercises as games
- Shoe selection
- Serial casting
- Stretching.
- Gait plates
- De-rotation splinting
- In-shoe stabilizing
- Surgery

Treatment is justified if a child is repeatedly tripping and falling or if the condition is painful (unusual). Intoeing should be reducing with age, so extra attention and careful examination is warranted if intoeing is not reducing or is increasing with age.

Practitioner's Notes:

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