

Out-toeing / In-toeing

Out-toeing and in-toeing are common in children and are usually part of normal development.

Out-toeing refers to feet that are turned outward during standing or walking. It is nearly always part of normal growth and development and rarely requires treatment.

In-toeing refers to feet that are turned inward during standing or walking. It may originate from the foot, the shin bone or the thigh bone.

- Foot (Metatarsus Adductus)

Metatarsus Adductus is the most common cause of in-toeing from birth to 18 months of age. The foot is curved inward, similar in shape to a kidney bean. If the foot is flexible and can be gently pulled into a straight position, treatment is usually not necessary. If the foot is more rigid, your doctor may recommend stretching, special shoes or casting.

- Shin bone (Tibial Torsion)

Tibial Torsion is the most common cause of in-toeing in toddlers and young children (18 to 36 months). The shin bone (tibia) is twisted or rotated causing the foot to turn inward.

- Thigh bone (Femoral Anteversion)

Femoral Anteversion is the most common cause of in-toeing in children between the ages of three and seven. This is a slight rotation of the top of the thigh bone (femur) and occurs more often in girls. Sitting “W” style does not worsen the condition.

Treatment

Medical treatment is rarely necessary. Many years ago it was believed that bracing, exercises or special shoes helped correct out-toeing and in-toeing. However, years of study have demonstrated that they are **not** effective. While out-toeing and in-toeing usually improve with time, they do not always completely resolve. It is important to remember that some in-toeing or out-toeing is still within the range of “normal.” Out-toeing or in-toeing is not associated with any long-term problems in adults.

Facts about out-toeing / in-toeing

- Out-toeing and in-toeing are a common part of normal development in children.
- Out-toeing and in-toeing will not affect your child’s ability to walk, run or play.
- Falling is a part of learning to walk and run and is not exclusively caused by in-toeing, although it may seem more common or severe in children with in-toeing.