

## Toe walking advice sheet

What is toe walking?

Toe walking children walk on the balls of their feet (on their tip toes) and their heels do not contact the ground. Most parents notice their children toe walking when they begin walking independently, but some children start toe walking after a period of walking normally. The usual walking progression for most children is to walk with flat feet by aged 2 and with a heel toe pattern by aged 3. When this does not happen and tip toe walking persists, and there is no evidence of other conditions, this is called idiopathic toe walking.

Facts and figures about toe walking:

- About 5% of all children will have a history of toe walking and more than half of these will stop by the age of 5 (children tend to toe walk for a period of 1-2 years)
- Children who continue to toe walk do so for about 25% of the time

Why has my child not been offered a physiotherapy appointment?

You have completed a questionnaire which has been designed to identify the children who need to be assessed. The answers you have given have reassured us that your child does not require our input because:

- They do not toe walk or stand on their tip toes all the time
- They can stand still with their heels on the floor and their feet pointing forwards
- They can perform a squat to the floor with their heels down – this tells us that their calf muscles are not tight
- They do not complain of pain
- They have a history of normal developmental milestones

IF ANY OF THESE FACTORS CHANGE PLEASE REFER YOUR CHILD BACK INTO THE SERVICE VIA OUR REFERRAL PORTAL ON <https://childrensreferrals.sabp.nhs.uk/>

How can I check that my child's calf muscles are not getting tight?

- Make sure they can stand still with their heels down
- Make sure they can squat to the floor with their heels down

If you think your child's calf muscles are getting tight then please try the stretches with them on the attached sheet. Try and do the exercises each day for a couple of weeks to see whether there is an improvement. If you still have concerns after trying this please make a referral via the portal using the web address above.