



TOE WALKING

Definition:

A child who tends to walk on his/her toes without pressure into the heel

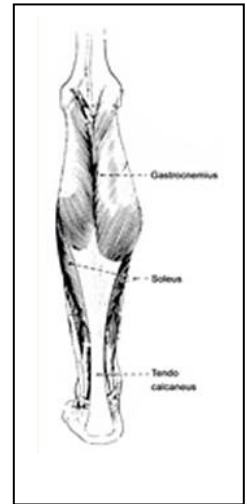
Causes:

- Shortened Achilles tendon
- Visual perceptual deficits
- Sensory dysfunction
- Muscle imbalance - stiffness or weakness
- Habit



Facts:

- Children experiment with toe walking between 18 months to 2 years
- Toe walking can be hereditary
- Toe walking past 2 may indicate a brain body problem with mechanics or processing and can increase risk of falling


Activities:



Sensory seeking:

- Jump on a variety of surfaces
- Walking in sand
- Walk on texture: bubble wrap to pop bubbles
- Hippity hop 
- See saw 
- Sitting on floor- both legs up, kick ball with both feet at same time
- Elephant stomp - stomp when walking, stomp on beanbags or "bugs"
- Ball see saw -with feet flat

Habitual - motor control:

- Shift from side to side
- Robot walk - heel walking
- Duck walk - walk on inside of feet
- Penguin walk - walk on outside of feet
- Scrunch rag on floor with toes
- Baby steps: watch feet walk forward and backwards
- jumping on bed or trampoline 
- Jump rope activities
- "red light/green light" - start/stop walking

Visual perceptual difficulties:

- jump rope - step over, step on, walk a rope
- jumping down or over object
- air writing with toes
- turn pages of a book with toes



Tight muscles:

- Massage the calf, Achilles and foot with firm deep pressure
- Hold the big toe towards head count of 7 to lengthen
- Footflex (Brain gym®) - hold calf muscle near knee bend and bring foot head direction and hold for 7 seconds, repeat 4-6x

Evidence based support:

<http://www.hopkinsortho.org/orthopedicsurgery/toewalking.html>
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2933674/>

<http://autism-help.org/comorbid-visual-problems.htm>

Children's Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota, Patient/Family Education, Toe walking (idiopathic), Home program, Retrieved from <http://www.childrensmn.org/Manuals/PFS/Condill/189188.pdf>

