

## Intoeing Information for parents

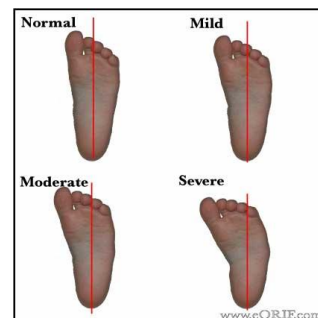
### What is it?

Intoeing or pigeon toes describes the way a child walks if their feet point inwards. In 95% of children this will resolve spontaneously by the age of ten.

### What causes it?

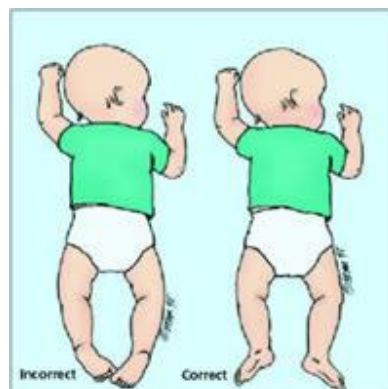
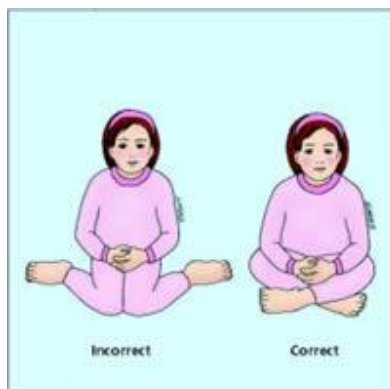
In healthy children there are three main causes of intoeing:

1. Metatarsus Adductus - this is when the front of the foot curves inwards. It normally gets better on its own but there are some simple stretches which may help if necessary.
2. Internal tibial torsion - this is caused by a twist in the shin bone. Turning inwards is normal in babies and will gradually straighten as the child grows. It can be seen in some children up to the age of ten.
3. Excessive femoral anteversion- this is caused by a twist of the thigh bone. This causes the knees and feet to point in when walking. It is very common and although it usually gets better during the first years of life it can get worse between the ages of two and four. It usually resolves without treatment by the age of ten.



### Positions to avoid

1. Children who sit in the "W" position with their knees bent and feet tucked underneath which reinforces the inward rotation of the legs so this should be discouraged if possible.
2. Tummy lying for sleep also encourages inward rotation of the legs, so should be discouraged.



## Is it serious and will my child need treatment?

Intoeing is common in young children and is rarely a problem, even if it doesn't go away by itself. You may find your child trips more than normal, particularly if they are tired or wearing heavy shoes. There is good evidence that these children do not have an increased risk of hip or knee arthritis or functional difficulties in later life.

Research shows that braces, special shoes and exercises make no difference at improving rotation of the thigh or shin bone whatever the cause surgery is only ever considered in very severe cases after the age of 9 or 10. It will nearly always resolve on its own by the age of ten.

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