

Lakeview Community Wellness Center Orthopaedic Connection

Intoeing

By Thomas J. Haverbush, M.D.
Orthopaedic Surgeon

Transforming patient information into patient understanding.

I see children all the time in the office because the parents are concerned about the toes turning inward when walking. Sometimes it is called pigeon toed.

It can be present for two reasons. It is sometimes due to the way the child was lying in the uterus. Some children inherit the tendency from their parents.

Signs

The condition is not painful and often doesn't interfere with the child's ability to walk. If the condition is severe it can cause tripping and falling. On the other hand that can be normal for a toddler even without the condition because they are clumsy.

4 Conditions

Actually I am telling you about 4 conditions. They may be separate or in combinations.

- Toes and forefoot turn mildly inward and the foot is flexible.
- Lower leg (tibia) is mildly rotated inward causing the foot to turn in also.
- The thigh bone (femur) near the top is turned inward and the lower leg and foot follow. It becomes most prominent when the child is age 5 or 6.
- Metatarsus adductus is a condition that resembles a clubfoot. In Metatarsus adductus the feet bend inward from the middle of the feet to the toes.

How I Treat It

In the past most of these children were treated with braces, special shoes and exercises. As time has passed these measures are rarely used nowadays. Why? The mild turning in of the foot and toes is outgrown by the second birthday.

The rotation inward of the lower leg will correct as the child gains height by age 3.

The turning inward of the upper femur (anteversion) is mostly outgrown by age 8 - 11.

Metatarsus adductus is more often treated than the other conditions depending on the degree of deformity and how rigid it is. It can improve on its own. Sometimes I use casts or special corrective shoes.

Closing Thought

Some parents worry that letting their toddler with intoeing walk barefoot will hurt their feet. Not true. It is perfecting OK for him or

her to walk barefoot, except when shoes are needed for warmth or protection outside.

Mostly parents and especially grandparents can relax, but there is nothing wrong with having the child's condition checked to be sure.

Nothing I have said today applies to Clubfoot which is a different and more serious problem that requires its own separate discussion.

Lakeview Area News Archive and Office Website

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It is! Every article is listed by title in the archive from most recent back to the first. Click on the title and the whole article appears magically. These articles contain a huge amount of information you can use.

While you are at it, look over the website library of Orthopaedic articles as well as Your Orthopaedic Connection. These two sources have a huge amount of Orthopaedic information that can be useful to you, your family and friends. I urge you to check it out.

Orthopaedic Clinic

I also hope you realize by now that I am at Lakeview Community Wellness Center every first and third Friday afternoons seeing patients.

You can simply call and make your own appointment. Call 989-463-6092 to make an appointment at the Lakeview Community Wellness Center Orthopaedic Clinic or at the office in Alma.

Approaching Clinic dates are Friday November 18 and December 2, 2011.

I am there for you. Call if you need me.

Our goal is simple - To help people return to more pain free, functional lives. I specialize in you.

Good health. Good life. All the best to you.

Be well.

Dr. Haverbush