

# Idiopathic Toe Walking

Idiopathic toe walking refers to a normal child who walks on their tiptoes for no known reason. The child can usually stand and walk with their heels down if prompted, but they habitually walk and run on their toes (**Figure 1**).

There may be some tightness in the calf muscle, which may contribute to your child preferring to walk on their toes. Daily calf stretches may be of benefit (**Figure 2**).

The natural history of this condition is that children eventually 'come down' onto their heels with age and weight.

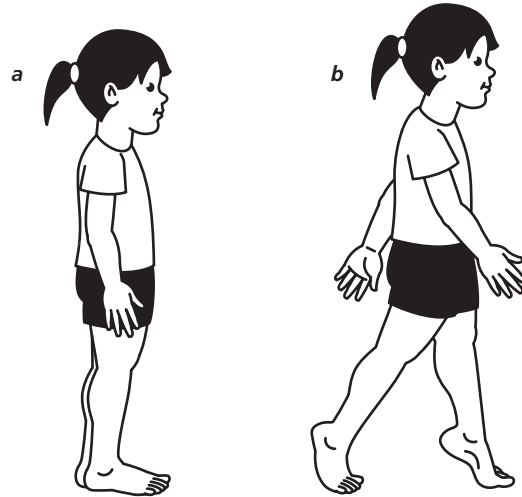
The management of idiopathic toe walkers is controversial, but options may include inserts in shoes, serial plasters, splints, Botox injections, stretches or watch, wait and see!

Some activities to encourage your child to walk with their heels down include:

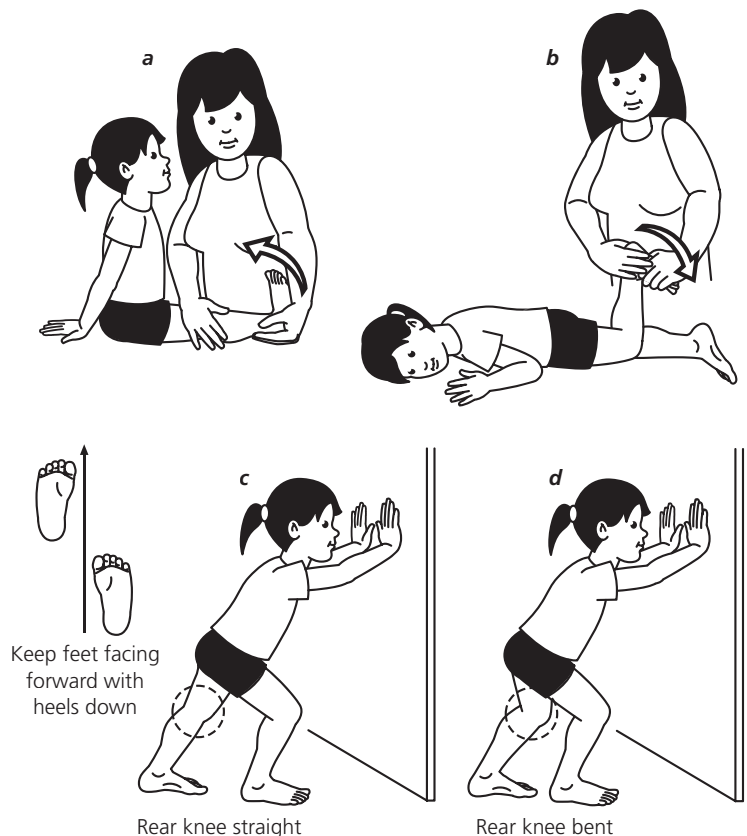
- balancing on one leg
- walk on heels
- walk heel-toe forward or backward along a line.

However, it is important to consult a paediatric orthopaedic surgeon if:

- toe walking is causing difficulty with activities (e.g. unable to walk or run due to constant tripping and falling)
- toe walking is only on one side
- your child is unable to stand with their heels on the ground.



**Figure 1.** When standing the heels remain on the ground (a), but when walking the child uses their toes (b).



**Figure 2.** Daily calf stretches may be of benefit for idiopathic toe walking. Hold each stretch for 30 seconds.