

# Out-toeing

## What is Out-toeing?

Out-toeing describes feet that turn outwards instead of pointing straight ahead. You notice it when a child walks or runs. Children of all ages may have out-toeing for different reasons and some children will trip or fall as they walk and run.

It is considered part of normal development. In most cases, out-toeing will correct itself as children grow without the need for casts, braces, surgery or special treatment. If it does not fully resolve, out-toeing does not cause pain or any long term problems.



## What Causes Out-toeing?

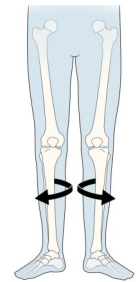
Three main conditions can cause the feet to turn outward:

### 1. An outward twist of the thighbone (Femoral Retroversion)

A child's thighbone can turn outward causing the knees and feet to point outward when walking or running. This often occurs due to the position of the baby during pregnancy. Femoral Retroversion corrects itself in almost all children as they grow. Special shoes, braces and exercises do not help.

### 2. An outward twist of the bone in the lower leg (Tibial Torsion)

A child's shin bone can turn outward, sometimes due to tight ligaments and tendons in the upper leg that causes the lower leg to twist as the child grows. This is often seen in children between the ages of 4 to 7 years. In rare instances, an Orthopedic Surgeon can be consulted to address this change.



External tibial torsion

### 3. Changes in the forefoot (Pes Planovalgus)

Flat feet or "Pes Planovalgus" occurs when there is less arch to the foot. This can give the appearance of out-toeing. It is normal for

babies and toddlers to have flexible flat feet. The arch will typically start developing around age 3 and out-toeing will usually improve on its own without treatment.



Normal Foot

Pes Planus

## What can I do?

Most children who out-toe will self correct over time with growth and do not require treatment. If you have concerns as your child is getting older or if your child is unable to complete daily activities due to out-toeing, then contact your child's doctor to discuss your concerns.

If you have spoken to your health care provider and continue to have concerns, please contact Pathways Health Centre for Children to book an appointment at 519.542.3471.