Why does my child walk up on his tip toes?

Toe walking is common in toddlers and sometimes persists in older children. It can result in tight heel cords and weak muscles in the lower leg and ankle.

Exercises to stretch his heel cord and strengthen his ankle muscles can decrease toe walking. Start by stretching his heel cord with his knee bent. Hold the stretch while slowly straightening his knee.
Play with your toddler in a squat position for easy stretching. Straight leg raises are also helpful.

Teach your child how to walk on his heels to strengthen the ankle muscles. Practice standing and raising his toes off the floor and then progress to walking on his heels. He may need to watch you when first learning.

Have fun with your child; keep the stretching sessions short and frequent. Count to ten and repeat 3 to 5 times on each leg. Several minutes each session, several times a day is helpful for building strength.

This information is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of medical advice or care you receive from your physician or other health care professional. If you have persistent health problems, or if you have additional questions, please consult your doctor.

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