



# Tibial Torsion

Tibial torsion is an inward rotation or twisting of the lower tibia. Most children outgrow it by age 3.

## To Learn More

- Orthopedics  
206-987-2109
- Ask your child's healthcare provider
- [www.seattlechildrens.org](http://www.seattlechildrens.org)

## Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your child's nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.
- For Deaf and hard of hearing callers  
206-987-2280 (TTY)

## What is tibial torsion?

Tibial torsion is an inward twisting of the tibia (shin bone). It is the most common cause of in-toeing. In-toeing is when a child's feet point inwards when they walk. Tibial torsion is often first noticed when your infant begins to walk. It can affect both legs or just one.

## Who gets it?

Most children have some degree of tibial torsion when they are babies. Most children outgrow it by age 3, but some may take a little longer.

## What is the cause?

In most cases, tibial torsion is thought to result from the way a baby was positioned inside the mother's womb.

## What is the treatment?

Babies with mild to moderate tibial torsion nearly always outgrow it. The best treatment is patience; just waiting for the leg to correct itself. The use of special shoes does not help. The twisting will get better over time. If twisting seems to be getting worse and the leg is bowing more, it is important to have your child checked by a doctor.

## Is surgery ever needed?

Rarely. About one child in 1,000 will not outgrow tibial torsion. If the twisting is severe and causes difficulty in walking after the age of 8 years, then a surgery may be done. It is necessary to cut the bone and rotate the foot to correct this. The child will be in casts for two to three months after surgery.

Seattle Children's offers interpreter services for Deaf, hard of hearing or non-English speaking patients, family members and legal representatives free of charge. Seattle Children's will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Call the Family Resource Center at 206-987-2201.

This handout has been reviewed by clinical staff at Seattle Children's. However, your child's needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your child's healthcare provider.

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