

## Contact us

### Children's Physiotherapy Direct

Tel: **0300 421 6980**

**www.ghc.nhs.uk**

0-16 years (or 16-18 in full-time education).

Open Mon-Fri (excluding bank holidays) 9am-12pm.

Your views are important to us. If you need advice or have feedback on a community hospital in Gloucestershire, or on our community health and adult social care services, you can contact one of the advisers from our Service Experience team.

All enquiries are completely confidential. You can contact us between 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday.

This leaflet can also be supplied in braille, audio format, PDF, large print, easy read and other languages on request.

**Telephone:** **0300 421 8313** (answerphone available outside office hours)

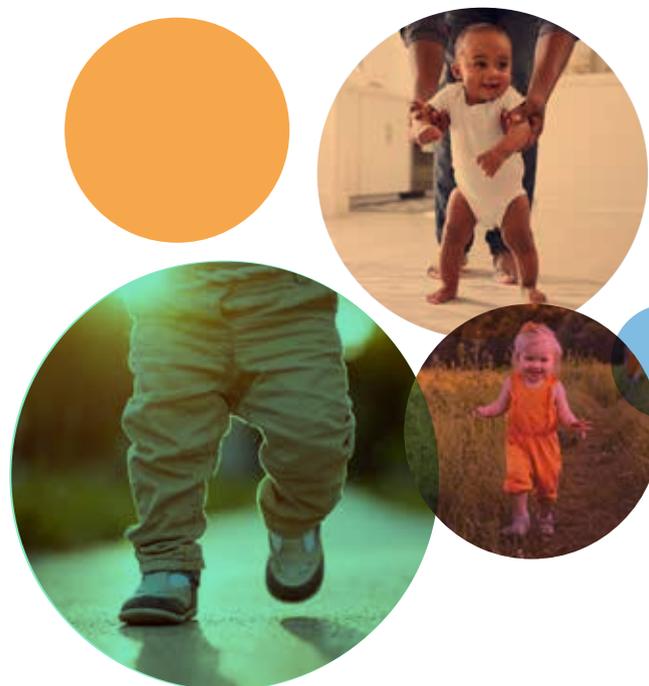
**Email:** **experience@ghc.nhs.uk**

**Write to:** **Patient and Carer Experience Team,  
Gloucestershire Health and Care  
NHS Foundation Trust, Edward Jenner  
Court, 1010 Pioneer Avenue, Gloucester  
Business Park, Brockworth,  
Gloucester GL3 4AW**



**Gloucestershire  
Health and Care**  
NHS Foundation Trust

## Normal Gait Variations



## Information for patients

## Introduction

When children learn how to walk it is normal for them to stretch out their arms and to step with their feet apart to maintain their balance.

As they practice walking, they can walk really fast and may trip or fall down more frequently, especially before 3 years old. As toddlers grow, the length of the steps tends to increase and they start to walk slower.

As the young children grow and develop, there are various changes that may concern parents, but are usually part of normal development.

## The facts

- In normal childhood development both legs will look similar.
- Leg alignment varies with age and appear to be family-history related.
- Walking on tip-toes (toe walking) is common in children up to 3 years old.
- Knocked knees can be related with in-toeing (feet pointing inwards) and is usually resolved by the age of 7 years.
- In-toeing is most common in children aged between 3–8 years.
- Bow legs are common from birth and usually associated with out-toeing (feet pointing outwards). Bow legs mostly straighten by 18 months.
- Flat feet are very common and tends to be resolved between the ages of 6–10 years.

These variations are part of normal development, so there is no need to restrict your child's activities unless specifically advised to do so.

## When to contact your GP (doctor)

- If these normal variations persist, worsen or the foot or leg appears very different from the other
- If there is pain or functional limitation (if it is stopping them from doing normal activities).

