

# Why Children Fall

## How often do children fall?

Falling is a normal part of development. Research has shown toddlers fall an average of **17 times per hour**. Children may start to fall less after the age of three. You may notice children fall more often when they are learning a new skill, trying to walk and run faster or trying new balance skills. It is important to keep in mind every child is unique and some children may fall more than others. Children may fall more often if they are easily distracted or like the feeling of crashing.



## What can affect your child's balance?

- Body awareness - *the understanding of where your body is in space in relation to the environment*
- Proprioception - *the understanding of where your arms and legs are during standing and moving*
- Visual attention - *the ability to look at what you are doing*
- Divided attention- *the ability to move attention from one thing to another*
- Vestibular- *the ability of your inner ear to sense the movement of your body through space*
- Coordination- *the ability of your arms and legs to work well together*
- Self-regulation- *the ability to obtain, maintain, and change alertness level appropriate for a task*
- Leg and ankle strength- *the ability of your muscles to support the body against gravity and decrease falls*
- Leg and ankle flexibility- *the ability of your body to move appropriately to correct your body when you get off balance*

## Things to do at home

*Strengthen stomach and back muscles:*

- animal walking (bear, crab, frog jump, donkey kick), wheelbarrow walking, swimming, playing at the park

*Stretch tight leg muscles:*

- Try yoga class or yoga cards, or watch free YouTube videos

*Balance on one leg (flamingo balance):*

- pop bubbles with toes, take stickers off toes

*Walk in different ways:*

- walk on heels, walk on toes, walk backwards
- make an obstacle course to walk around objects like pillows and blankets

## When to speak with your child's doctor

- If your child is not meeting developmental milestones
- If your child cannot perform self-care skills
- If your child has a hard time keeping up with same-aged peers at school or in the community
- If you are having concerns for your child's safety due to falls