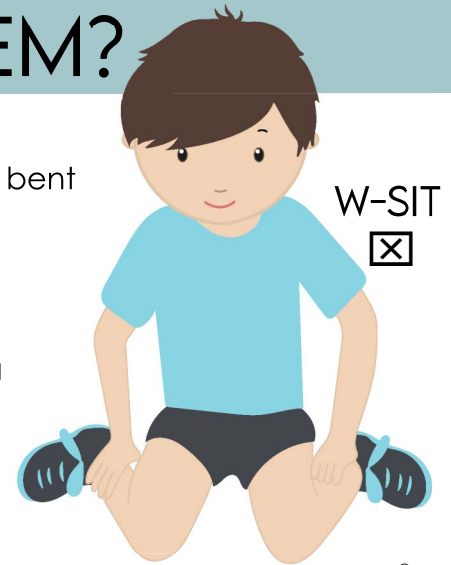


W-SITTING IN CHILDREN: WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

WHAT IS IT?

- In this position a child sits on their bottom with both hips and knees bent and turned inward.
- The inside of both legs touch the sitting surface.
- Many babies and young children briefly and occasionally use this position for sitting while playing and exploring.
- However, prolonged and long term use of this position can have a negative impact on the child.
- Making a habit of W-Sitting interferes with a child's muscle and skeletal growth, as well as the advancement of higher level mobility and fine motor skills.



WHY DO SOME CHILDREN MAKE A HABIT OF W-SITTING?

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- Children who rely on W-Sitting position are generally those with poor sitting balance and decreased core strength in the torso.
- While most children briefly move in and out of W-Sitting, they also use a variety of other sitting positions.
- Children with muscle tone that is too high (stiff) or low (floppy) may need to W-Sit to stay upright.
- Unfortunately, over-reliance on this position will make some muscles tight and others over-stretched.
- The child will not experience shifts of movement for balance skills.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

It may not be easy to quickly change a child's reliance on W-Sitting, but the following will help:

- The easiest and most effective way to keep W-Sitting from being a problem is to prevent it from being a habit.
- Gently and consistently help your child to assume different sitting positions.
- If your child is already in this position, encourage him/her to sit another way. Offer assistance as needed.
- Try long sitting, side sitting, cross legged sitting, laying on belly/elbows, or tummy time.
- If your child cannot sit upright without using the W-pattern, offer support through the use of pillows and cushions.
- Some children do well sitting up on a small platform such as a phone book or placing his/her back against the couch or wall.
- If your child is receiving therapy, get specific advice to help your child.



LONG SIT



SIDE SIT



CROSS LEGGED SIT



ON BELLY/ELBOWS