

Occupational Therapy Information: The “W-Sitting” Posture

What is W-Sitting?

When in the W-Sitting position, the child is sitting on his/her bottom with legs bent and rotated away from the body. If you stand above the child and look down, it looks like the legs are forming a W.



Why do Children W-Sit?

The w-sit posture provides the child with a wider base of support, which gives the child more stability through the hips and trunk while seated. This position lessens the need for the child to utilize core strength while seated on the floor. If a child is often w-sitting, they may have decreased postural strength and stability.

Why is W-Sitting an Issue?

If a child *frequently* sits in the w-sit posture, it can shorten and tighten the hip and leg muscles. This can result in issues with walking, may lead to become “pigeon toed,” or cause pelvis pain. This seated position may also limit trunk rotation, impacting the ability to shift weight to either side or reach and cross midline. It may also impact balance reactions.

How Can You Help?

Encourage your child to find a different way to sit on the floor, including straight-legged or long-sitting (legs out in front), pretzel sitting (criss-cross), or sit on a small bench or stool.

You can also help your child participate in postural strength and stability exercises to help them strengthen their core. Exercises may include:

- Superman position: child lies on stomach and lifts arms and legs off the ground. Make it fun by having the child pretend to fly like an airplane!
- Perform activities while lying on his/her stomach on the floor (read, draw, puzzles, blocks)
- Wheelbarrow walking (hold child’s legs while child walks on hands)
- Sit-ups
- Scooter board activities while lying on stomach or on back
- Animal walking exercises (bear crawl, crab walk)

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