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PHYSICAL THERAPY & WALKING: **STARTING WITH BABY STEPS**

Read more inside on What To Anticipate With Pediatric Physical Therapy,
Top 4 Family Spring Break Destinations, and Pediatric Classes March 2023!

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PHYSICAL THERAPY & WALKING: STARTING WITH BABY STEPS



Parents eagerly await their child's first steps. If you're lucky enough to catch it with your phone or a camera, it'll make an adorable home video to watch for years to come!

However, if you're worried because your child hasn't started walking yet, know that you're not alone. Late walkers can be concerning, but a pediatric physical therapist can offer comfort and direction.

A pediatric therapist at Amber Hill Therapy Centers may be able to help your child with their walking abilities.

Call our clinic today to make an appointment. With us, you can rest assured that your child is in good hands.

At What Point Should Your Child See A Pediatric Physical Therapist?

You might be wondering as you read this, "When should I take my child to see a physical therapist?" That's an excellent question!

To help answer that, let's look at typical development.

A developmental delay is diagnosed when a child is assessed as being more than "a little behind" in performing everyday skills, according to ChoosePT. The term refers to a significant lag in performance and can be used to describe any type of delay in one or more of the five skill areas listed below:

- Activities of daily living
- Speech and language
- Social and emotional
- Cognitive (thinking)
- Fine and gross motor (movement)

Let's take a closer look at the gross motor skill of walking. According to Pathways.org, at around 10-12 months, infants will begin to pull themselves up to stand and cruise along furniture, and between 13-18 months, they will start to walk independently.

Pediatric physical therapists commonly treat late walking as a developmental delay. If you are worried about your child, please contact us at Amber Hill Therapy Centers to schedule an evaluation.

Factors That May Influence Late Walking

A specific medical condition may or may not cause gross motor delays. A child with Down syndrome (DS), for example, is diagnosed with the condition at or before birth but may also have developmental delays.

Children with autism or cerebral palsy may also have delayed walking development. Children with no specific medical condition may face challenges due to parenting styles, cultural norms, or life circumstances.

Pediatric physical therapists can help determine the cause and develop an effective treatment plan.

When developmental progress is questioned, the family and healthcare providers must address it as soon as possible.

**Get Your Life Back with
Amber Hill Therapy Centers!**

*Make an appointment today to start
living your life again, pain-free!*

Stop letting pain get in the way. Give us a call or visit www.amberhillpt.com today!

WHAT TO ANTICIPATE WITH PEDIATRIC PHYSICAL THERAPY

A physical therapist will conduct a thorough evaluation of your child. *This assessment will include:*

- A parental interview including child's medical history
- Standardized assessment such as the Bayley Scales of Gross Motor Development or the Peabody Developmental Gross Motor Scale
- Assessment of your child's range of motion and strength
- Primitive reflex testing
- Observation of movement patterns, including balance and coordination

Treatment will include enjoyable activities to encourage your child to walk. Balance can be improved by using platform swings. Elevated surfaces with toys can be used to encourage pull to stand, cruising, and walking between supports. A home program will be created in collaboration with you to work on activities at home.

Just because your child is developing at a slower rate does not mean they will not eventually make those strides! Many late walkers can overcome their delay and catch up with their peers without incident. You can also encourage them to take those first steps by doing various things at home.

Parenting Tips To Encourage Walking At Home

The best results are obtained when parents and therapists work together to ensure that a child receives consistent intervention outside of physical therapy sessions.

Here are some suggestions for encouraging independent walking at home:

1. Allow your child to run around barefoot. Barefoot walking promotes functional strengthening and increased proprioceptive input. The use of shoes and orthotics can sometimes impede gait development.
2. Make it enjoyable to pull up to a stand and reach for toys. Surfaces that are safe and sturdy, with fun and enticing items on top, encourage upright mobility.
3. Participate in activities that require a lot of up-and-down motion. Reaching overhead and picking things up from the floor are excellent ways to strengthen your core.



4. Inspire siblings and peers to compete and cheer! Children enjoy imitating other children and attempting to keep up.
5. Don't panic. Children can read stress and emotion and can tell if you're upset. Just play!

Ready To Begin Pediatric Physical Therapy?

Remember that late development does not imply that your child will not develop at all. Each of us is on our own timeline for growth, development, and learning.

Speaking with a pediatric physical therapist about healthy strategies for your child's first steps will put your mind at ease and provide you with a plan of action.

To schedule an evaluation, contact Amber Hill Therapy Centers.

Sources
<https://www.choosept.com/guide/physical-therapy-guide-developmental-delay>
<https://pathways.org/all-ages/milestones/>



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TOP 4 FAMILY SPRING BREAK DESTINATIONS

Where is your family headed this spring break? You've come to the right place if you don't know yet. We've put together a list of 4 incredible destinations for your family to enjoy this spring. Check out our list below to discover your next trip!

1. **San Diego** - From beaches to museums, San Diego truly has it all. The weather is perfect in March and April for spending time outdoors, and if you have time, you have to check out the world-renowned San Diego zoo!
2. **Grand Canyon** - This Arizona national park is perfect for families due to its adventure activities and breathtaking landscapes. You can take a rafting trip down the Colorado River or spend an hour or two hiking the famous Rim Trail. Check this one off your bucket list with the whole family!
3. **Honolulu** - If you're searching for a beach vacation, there's almost no better place in the world than Honolulu. However, this trip can be educational too! Take a visit to the Pearl Harbor memorial or the Honolulu zoo.
4. **Washington, D.C.** - There's no shortage of educational opportunities in our nation's capital. From the Smithsonian National Museum to National Mall, Washington, D.C., proves that learning can be a blast. And if your spring break coincides with the National Cherry Blossom Festival (held in late March or early April), you're in for a beautiful treat!

PEDIATRIC CLASSES

MARCH 2023

\$100 for a 4-class session

Feeding Littles (Ages 2-5) Join our play-based feeding group to help add new foods into your child's diet and make mealtime more fun! (March 6th, 13th, 20th & 27th 10:20AM in our Frederick location)

Getting Crafty (3-5 years old) Help your child work on their fine and visual motor skills needed for school in a fun way! (March 2nd, 9th, 16th & 23rd, 9:00 – 9:40AM in the Frederick location)

Play Group (Ages 3 – 6 years old) In this class your little one will learn important social skills including cooperation, turn-taking, and problem-solving needed to engage with peers during play. (March 3rd, 10th, 17th & 24th 10:20AM in our Frederick location)

Writing Improvement! (Ages 5+) Does your child have illegible writing or difficulty with letters? Work on the skills needed to improve written communication in a fun and exciting class! (March 9th, 16th, 23rd & 30th at 3:00pm in our Urbana location)

Please contact the Urbana location at (240) 529-0175 for additional information.



WE'RE HIRING!

We are looking for a full-time Physical Therapist and Speech Therapist in the Frederick, MD area! Applicants must be licensed in Maryland. Check out details at <https://amberhillpt.com/join-our-team/> today! If you are interested in working in a team environment, continuously learning, advancing your clinical skills and getting patients back to the activities they love, we encourage you to send your cover letter and resume to kreichenbaugh@amberhillpt.com.



STAFF SPOTLIGHT

DR. KATHLEEN KOBER (KATIE), PT, DPT, PCS • OWNER

Katie has a Bachelor of Science in Biology from Elizabethtown College and a Doctorate in Physical Therapy from Marymount University. She is a board certified pediatric clinical specialist. Katie says she has always known that she wanted to be part of a helping profession. She spent time volunteering with children with special needs through middle school, high school and college and found it very rewarding to be part of the process of helping someone learn a new skill. She has spent much of her career working with birth to young adult patients with a variety of diagnosis and skill level. She believes that every child's job is to play and participate with peers and is passionate to push her patients to their highest level possible.

Your health is our highest priority. Give us a call or visit www.amberhillpt.com today!