

Bum scooting can be a variation of normal development and can include 3 point crawling, scooting on their bottoms or side shuffling. Some babies bum scoot for a short period and others do it as one of several mobility options. Crawling is an important experience for strength, coordination, and brain development. Bum scooting can become an issue if it is the only way a baby moves, especially once they are over 12 months old.



Why can bum scooting be a concern?

The issue isn't the action of scooting itself but rather, what babies are missing out on if they don't learn to crawl.

- Missed balance and movement input
When babies crawl, their head moves up, down, and side to side. This gives important input to the vestibular system which helps with balance, body awareness, and the skills needed for standing and walking.
- Less Core and Upper Body Strength
Crawling builds strong tummy, back, shoulder, and arm muscles. Babies need this strength to pull up to stand and eventually walk. Bum scooting mainly uses the legs, so babies may miss out on building this important upper-body and core strength.
- Less practice using both sides of the body together
Crawling teaches babies to move opposite arms and legs together (right arm with left leg, and vice versa). This "cross-body" movement helps the brain build connections needed for coordination, balance, and movement skills later in life.

A preference for bum scooting is often seen in babies who did not tolerate tummy time well. When this position is avoided for long periods, it can affect how certain skills develop. Babies may:

- Miss important early movement patterns that help the body and brain work together
- Not fully build the neck strength needed to lift and control their head

- Have a harder time moving their head independently from their body, which is an important skill for crawling and later for walking
- Have difficulty rolling from back to tummy in order to avoid spending time on their tummy
- Prefer sitting therefore bum scooting becomes their way of getting around
- Have difficulty with transitions in/out lying and sitting

Some possible causes may include hypermobility, muscle weakness or low muscle tone which can affect the child’s ability to move into or sustain a four point kneeling position. Activities to try at home include:

- Tummy Time: can be encouraged in a number of different ways to increase baby’s tolerance such as lying on a soft mat, supported with toys or a rolled-up towel under the chest for extra support, lying on caregiver’s chest, face-to-face, encouraging bonding and head lifting or using a tummy time pillow (small, firm, pillow designed to prop baby up, helping build neck and shoulder strength



- Promote time playing on hands and knees: over caregiver’s thigh, small roll or couch cushion



- Limit/avoid use of exersaucers, jumpers or baby “containers”; encourage floor time as much as possible

If you have any concerns about your child’s movement, crawling, or overall motor development, speak to your doctor or healthcare provider. They can check your child’s progress and offer guidance or support if needed.