

Trunk Rotation

What is trunk rotation?

Trunk rotation is a twisting motion of the upper body or trunk while keeping feet, knees, and hips stationary. Adequate trunk rotation is the ability to move the upper body at least 45 degrees from the body's midline in each direction.

The ability to rotate your trunk is important for children at school because it contributes to good posture, balance, and coordination, allowing them to easily participate in activities like writing, reaching for objects, turning in their chairs, and playing sports, which all require movement and flexibility in the core muscles; a lack of trunk rotation can hinder the ability to perform everyday tasks in the classroom and can lead to discomfort or difficulty with fine motor skills like writing or drawing.

What causes limitations in trunk rotation?

Any condition that results in reduced trunk strength can hinder trunk rotation abilities. Limited opportunities for tummy time or movement can significantly impact this as well. Additionally, decreased muscle tone, which may limit a child's capacity to support the trunk, can contribute to a decreased range of motion with trunk rotation.

How can decreased trunk rotation impact function?

You may notice the following in students with decreased trunk rotation:

- Students may have difficulty with handwriting across a page.
- Students may have difficulty turning in their seats to see the board.
- Students may have difficulty maintaining balance in their seats
- Students may have difficulty throwing, kicking or swinging a bat
- Students may have difficulty crossing the midlines of their body.



Can limitations in trunk rotation be changed?

Yes! In many instances, increasing trunk rotation can be achieved through a mix of exercises and stretching. For example, a straightforward yoga routine lasting 10 to 15 minutes, practiced 2 to 3 times a week, could lead to noticeable improvements.

Info sheets created with ❤️ by occupational therapists for parents and teachers.