

What is Gravitational Insecurity

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By: Shelby Hagedorn, COTA/L



Gravitational insecurity refers to the fear of being out of an upright position or having one's feet off the ground. If a child has gravitational insecurity, they have extreme emotional responses to movement or motion. These may include being lifted, swinging, going down a slide or anytime their feet are off the ground. If a child has gravitational insecurity, their vestibular system may not be functioning correctly. The vestibular system gathers information about balance and movement then sends it to the Central Nervous System.

Occupational therapy can address gravitational insecurity using sensory integration techniques. During therapy, your child will be provided graded vestibular input in a slow and gradual manner to help them learn to process the sensory input they are getting. The input is provided in a slow and gradual manner, so the child does not perceive these experiences as negative but in a positive way.

If you feel that your child struggles with any of these points, contact your pediatric therapy specialist or call us at 952-223-2506.

Gravitational insecurity can manifest in the following ways:

- Fear of heights
- Uncomfortable or has big reactions to changes in head position (leaning back, off to the side, etc..), especially upside down
- Avoids stairs or uneven surfaces
- Seems unbalanced in walking at times
- Dislikes high playground equipment such as slides or swings
- Fear of falling
- Anxious when their feet leave the ground

References:

North Shore Pediatric Therapy, Gravitational Insecurity (n.d.) Retrieved on April, 29, 2020 from <https://www.nspt4kids.com/healthtopics-and-conditions-database/gravitational-insecurity/>

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