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Babinski reflex

Babinski reflex is one of the normal reflexes in infants. Reflexes are responses that occur when the body receives a certain stimulus.

The Babinski reflex occurs after the sole of the foot has been firmly stroked. The big toe then moves upward or toward the top surface of the foot. The other toes fan out.

This reflex is normal in children up to 2 years old. It disappears as the child gets older. It may disappear as early as 12 months.

Causes

When the Babinski reflex is present in a child older than 2 years or in an adult, it is often a sign of a central nervous system disorder. The central nervous system includes the brain and spinal cord. Disorders may include:

- Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (Lou Gehrig disease)
- Brain tumor or injury
- Meningitis (infection of the membranes covering the brain and spinal cord)
- Multiple sclerosis
- Spinal cord injury, defect, or tumor
- Stroke

Alternative Names

Reflex - Babinski; Extensor plantar reflex; Babinski sign

References

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Updated by: Amit M. Shelat, DO, FACP, Attending Neurologist and Assistant Professor of Clinical Neurology, SUNY Stony Brook, School of Medicine, Stony Brook, NY. Review provided by VeriMed Healthcare Network. Also reviewed by David Zieve, MD, MHA, Medical Director, Brenda Conaway, Editorial Director, and the A.D.A.M. Editorial team.

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