

[Open Peer Review on Qeios](#)

Foot Drop

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS)

Source

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS). [Foot Drop Information Page](#).

Foot drop describes the inability to raise the front part of the foot due to weakness or paralysis of the muscles that lift the foot. As a result, individuals with foot drop scuff their toes along the ground or bend their knees to lift their foot higher than usual to avoid the scuffing, which causes what is called a “steppage” gait. Foot drop can be unilateral (affecting one foot) or bilateral (affecting both feet). Foot drop is a symptom of an underlying problem and is either temporary or permanent, depending on the cause. Causes include: neurodegenerative disorders of the brain that cause muscular problems, such as multiple sclerosis, stroke, and cerebral palsy; motor neuron disorders such as polio, some forms of spinal muscular atrophy and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (commonly known as Lou Gehrig’s disease); injury to the nerve roots, such as in spinal stenosis; peripheral nerve disorders such as Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease or acquired peripheral neuropathy; local compression or damage to the peroneal nerve as it passes across the fibular bone below the knee; and muscle disorders, such as muscular dystrophy or myositis.