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8 **Does an inverted pendulum model represent the gait of individuals**
9 **with unilateral transfemoral amputation while walking over level**
10 **ground?**

11
12 Short title: Inverted pendulum gait model for individuals with UTF amputation

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14 Gerda Strutzenberger^a, Nathalie Alexander^a, Alan R. De Asha^b, Hermann
15 Schwameder^a, Cleveland T. Barnett^c

16
17 ^a*Department of Sport Science and Kinesiology, University of Salzburg, Schlossallee 49*
18 *5400 Hallein-Rif, Austria, gerda.strutzenberger@sbg.ac.at; nathalie.alexander@sbg.ac.at,*
19 *hermann.schwameder@sbg.ac.at*

20 ^b*C-Motion, Inc., 20030 Century Blvd. Suite 104A, Germantown, MD 20874, USA,*
21 *alan.deasha@c-motion.com*

22 ^c*School of Science and Technology, Nottingham Trent University, Nottingham, NG11 8NS, UK,*
23 *cleveland.barnett@ntu.ac.uk*

24
25 underscored: Last name of authors.

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29 **Corresponding Author:**

30 Gerda Strutzenberger, Department of Sport Science and Kinesiology, University of Salzburg,
31 Schlossallee 49, 5400 Hallein, Austria. Tel.: 0043 662 8044 4875

32 E-Mail address: gerda.strutzenberger@sbg.ac.at
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Abstract

Study Design: Controlled Trial

Background: An inverted pendulum model represents the mechanical function of able-bodied walking accurately, with centre of mass height and forward velocity data plotting as sinusoidal curves, 180 degrees out of phase.

Objectives: The current study investigated whether the inverted pendulum model represented level gait in individuals with a unilateral transfemoral amputation.

Methods: Kinematic and kinetic data from ten individuals with unilateral transfemoral amputation and fifteen able-bodied participants were recorded during level walking.

Results: During level walking, the inverted pendulum model described able-bodied gait well throughout the gait cycle, with median relative time shifts between centre of mass height and velocity maxima and minima of between 1.2%-1.8% of gait cycle. In the group with unilateral transfemoral amputation, the relative time shift was significantly increased during the prosthetic-limb initial double-limb support phase by 6.3%.

Conclusion: The gait of individuals with unilateral transfemoral amputation shows deviation from a synchronous inverted pendulum model during prosthetic limb stance. The reported divergence may help explain such individuals' increased metabolic cost of gait. Temporal divergence of inverted pendulum behaviour could potentially be utilised as a tool to assess the efficacy of prosthetic device prescription.

Word count: 191

1 **Clinical Relevance:** The size of the relative time shifts between CoM height and velocity
2 maxima and minima could potentially be used as a tool to quantify the efficacy of innovative
3 prosthetic device design features aimed at reducing the metabolic cost of walking and improving
4 gait efficiency in individuals with amputation.

5 **Keywords:**

6 Centre of mass velocity, centre of mass height, mechanistic gait model

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1 Background

2 Researchers have previously used an inverted pendulum model to represent the mechanical
3 functioning of normal, bipedal overground walking (e.g. 1, 2-5). The inverted pendulum model
4 is, by intention, simplistic. It represents each of the lower limbs as a single rigid segment, capable
5 of rotation about the ankle during stance, with the whole-body centre of mass (CoM) located at
6 its superior end. This model sits comfortably with the mechanical reality of walking, as the
7 vertical trajectory of the CoM and its forward velocity vary during the gait cycle in a similar
8 manner to that of the bob of an oscillating pendulum. The CoM is higher and slower during
9 single-limb support and lower and faster during double-limb support. When plotted graphically,
10 CoM height and CoM forward velocity appear as sinusoidal curves, 180° out of phase, with CoM
11 peak forward velocity coinciding with the lowest CoM height and CoM minimum forward
12 velocity coinciding with maximum CoM height.

13 Individuals with a unilateral lower-limb amputation, are mechanically constrained during walking
14 by the prosthetic device used (6). As a result, they e.g. walk more slowly (7), fall more often (8)
15 and have a higher metabolic cost of walking (9-11) when compared to able-bodied individuals.
16 Multiple issues may affect the gait pattern of any given population of individuals with lower-limb
17 amputation, such as e.g. the ability of the prosthetic ankle and/or knee joint to allow flexion
18 during stance. It is not well understood if the mechanical constraints imposed by prosthetic
19 devices mean a mechanical model of walking could be applicable to individuals with a lower-
20 limb amputation. It has been demonstrated not to be the case in individuals with a unilateral
21 transtibial amputation (UTT), where peak CoM forward velocity and minimum CoM height did
22 not coincide during prosthetic-limb initial double-limb support (12). In such individuals, the CoM

1 accelerates forward to peak velocity after the minimum CoM height occurs, therefore whilst the
2 CoM is being elevated.
3
4 Specific gait characteristics have been reported for individuals with unilateral transfemoral
5 amputation (UTF). For example, those with UTF are likely to retain a more vertical projection of
6 the CoM at prosthetic-limb toe-off (13) and commonly use a vaulting mechanism, e.g. via
7 increased plantarflexion, during the intact-limb stance phase. This vaulting strategy supports the
8 elevation of the CoM and hence allows for sufficient prosthetic-limb toe clearance during swing
9 (14). Also, during the prosthetic-limb stance phase, prosthetic knee flexion is restricted in order
10 to prevent it unlocking and collapsing during weight bearing (15). Both aspects could affect the
11 efficacy of applying the inverted pendulum model to UTF gait, as the model does not include
12 varying pendulum lengths (as induced by the vaulting mechanism) and restrained knee flexion.
13 Additional the mechanical constraint to rotate around the flexion/extension axis of the ankle
14 might affect the synchrony of the inverted pendulum model . To date, the possibilities of applying
15 the inverted pendulum model to the gait of individuals with a UTF has not been established and it
16 remains unclear to what extent their specific gait characteristics influence the efficacy of applying
17 this model. Given the importance of step-to-step transitions in determining the metabolic cost of
18 walking (5, 11), and that disruptions of energy transformations associated with the inverted
19 pendulum mechanism can lead to increased energy expenditure (16), any breakdown of
20 compliance with the inverted pendulum model may partially explain the higher metabolic cost of
21 walking for those with a lower-limb amputation as demonstrated by Houdijk, Pollmann (11) for
22 individuals with UTT.

1 Therefore, the objective of this study was to investigate whether the level ground gait of
2 individuals with UTF is represented by an inverted pendulum model . It was hypothesized that
3 the model would during intact-limb stance perform similar for individuals with UTF compared to
4 able-bodied individuals, but different during prosthetic-limb stance.

5

6 **Methods**

7 Study Design: As study design, a controlled trial was chosen, comparing able-bodied individuals
8 with individuals with a unilateral transfemoral amputation.

9 Participants: The UTF group consisted of ten participants, all using the same prosthetic foot
10 (Esprit; Chas. A. Blatchford & Sons, Basingstoke, UK). Data from eight (Mean (SD) age: 42
11 (14.8) years, mass: 86.3 (15.3) kg, height: 1.74 (0.06) m.) walking over level ground, previously
12 published in De Asha, Munjal (12), were re-analyzed. Data from two further individuals with
13 UTF (Mean (SD) age: 53 (2.8) years, mass: 74.1 (14.9) kg, height: 1.81 (0.11) m) and 15 able-
14 bodied (AB) male individuals (Mean (SD) age: 27 (5) years, mass: 75.1 (9.1) kg, height: 1.81
15 (0.05) m) were collected at the University of Salzburg. All UTF participants had undergone
16 amputation at least two years prior to participation, were free from neurological, musculoskeletal
17 (other than limb amputation) or cardiovascular disorders, and had used their current prostheses
18 for at least six months. All were classed as being at least K3 on the Medicare scale by their
19 prescribing clinician and all used their habitual knee component (1x Orion, 1x EUK SAKL, 2x
20 KX06: all Chas A Blatchford & Sons, Basingstoke, UK; 1x C-leg, 1x 3R45: both Otto Bock,
21 Duderstadt, Germany; and 3x Total Knee: Ossur, Reykjavik, Iceland). Institutional bioethics

1 committee approval was obtained at both locations and written informed consent was provided by
2 all participants prior to data collection.

3 Data acquisition: In addition to the data from De Asha, Munjal (12), kinematic and kinetic data
4 were collected at 250 Hz and 1000 Hz respectively using an eight camera motion capture system
5 (Vicon, Oxford, UK) and two force plates (AMTI, Watertown, MA, USA). Participants walked at
6 their self-selected walking speed on an 8 m (8 TF, 12) and 6 m (2 TF all AB, Salzburg) walkway
7 with the two force platforms embedded in the middle of the walkways.

8 Reflective markers were attached to participants according to the Cleveland Clinic Marker Set
9 (Motion Analysis Corp, Santa Rosa, USA), which uses an anatomical landmark calibration
10 technique (17). Markers on the prosthetic knee were placed medially and laterally of the
11 rotational or approximated (for polycentric knee componentes) joint centre. At the prosthetic
12 ankle and foot, the markers were placed to correspond with those on the intact side. For all UTF
13 participants the mean of six trials at self-selected walking speed were analysed, while for the AB
14 group one representative trial was analysed for each participant.

15 Data processing: Labeling of marker trajectories was undertaken in Workstation and Nexus
16 software (Vicon, Oxford, UK) before all data were exported to Visual3D (C-Motion,
17 Germantown, USA) from which point on the processing was identical for all participants.
18 Kinematic and kinetic data were filtered using a fourth order, zero-lag Butterworth filter with a 6
19 Hz cut-off. A nine segment model (head, trunk, pelvis, thighs, shanks and feet) of each
20 participant was constructed. Initial contact (IC) and toe off (TO) were defined as the instants the
21 vertical component of the ground reaction force first went above or below 20 N, respectively. The
22 gait cycle was defined from IC of the prosthetic (UTF) or right (AB) limb to the consecutive IC

1 of the ipsilateral limb and normalized to 100%. In instances where no kinetic data were available
2 (i.e. a missed or incomplete force platform contact), IC and TO were defined using kinematic
3 data (18, 19). From these events phases of single-limb support(SS) and double-limb support
4 (DS), were defined. The position of the whole-model CoM was calculated as the weighted
5 average of the model's segmental CoMs (20-22). Forward velocity of the CoM was defined as
6 the first derivation of the CoM position in the walking direction, which was in line with the
7 global coordinate system of the respective laboratory. The height of the CoM was defined as the
8 instantaneous vertical distance between the CoM and the walking surface. For the UTF group
9 timings, normalised to the gait cycle, of the minimum and maximum CoM height and forward
10 velocity were identified in the following four phases: (i) Prosthetic initial double-support
11 (IDS_P); (ii) Prosthetic single-support (SS_P); (iii) Prosthetic terminal double-support (TDS_P);
12 (iv) Intact single-support (SS_I) (Figure 1). For the AB group these timings were identical, only
13 the analyzed gait cycle started with the right foot always, resulting in prosthetic phases
14 corresponding to the right side and SS_I corresponding to the left side (Figure 1).

15
16 For each phase, the relative time shift was calculated as the time difference between the maxima
17 and minima of CoM vertical position and forward velocity normalised to gait cycle duration.
18 Assuming inter-limb symmetry in the AB group, the mean of both, left and right, limbs were
19 calculated for the metric values. In case of perfect compliance with the inverted pendulum, a time
20 shift of zero would be observed with increasing time shift magnitude indicating reduced
21 adherence to the inverted pendulum model.

22 ---Figure 1---

1 Statistical analysis: Statistical testing was performed using SPSS software (v.23, IBM, Armonk,
2 NY, USA). UTF data were not normally distributed, thus a non-parametric statistical approach
3 was adopted for all participants.
4 The data first was analyzed to detect main effect of groups (UTF and AB) using a Friedman
5 Analysis of Variances by ranks . A second Friedman Analysis of Variances by ranks was used to
6 detect the main effect of phases (IDS_P, SS_P, TDS_P, SS_I). Post-hoc tests were conducted
7 where significant main effects were identified using a) for each phase the Mann-Whitney U-test
8 to detect differences between groups (AB vs. UTF) and b) for each group the Wilcoxon signed
9 rank test to detect differences between the phases). For all statistical tests an alpha level of 5%
10 ($p < 0.05$) was set. Post-hoc test were conducted using a Bonferroni-corrected alpha of $p = 0.008$
11 for phase comparisons, and $p = 0.013$ for group comparisons. Effect sizes were calculated as r
12 (23) with the boundaries of 0.1, 0.3 and 0.5 for small, medium and large.

13

14 **Results**

15 During level walking there were significant effects of group ($p = 0.004$), gait cycle phase ($p <$
16 0.001) and a group by phase interaction ($p < 0.001$) on the relative timings of CoM height and
17 velocity maxima and minima. Between gait phases the AB group did not show significant
18 differences in time shifts between CoM maxima and minima of height and forwards velocity,
19 with median relative time shifts ranging between 1.2% and 1.8% of gait cycle duration ($p >$
20 0.087 , Figure 1 & 2). For the UTF group the median relative time shift was significantly
21 increased during IDS_P phases compared to the TDS_P ($p = 0.005$, $r = 0.89$) and SS_I phase ($p =$
22 0.005 , $r = 0.89$) (Figure 1). Post hoc analysis of differences between the UTF and the AB group

1 indicated the difference was only significant during the IDS_P phase, when the UTF group
 2 displayed increased relative time shifts compared to the AB group (IDS_P, $p < 0.001$, $r = 0.79$),
 3 indicating that maximum CoM velocity occurred after minimum CoM height. In the TDS_P
 4 double-limb support phase the maximum CoM velocity was almost synchronous with minimum
 5 CoM height (Table 1, Figure 2).

6 ---Figure 2---

7
 8 Table 1: Median (IQR) of relative time shift of unilateral transfemoral (UTF) and able-bodied
 9 (AB) participants during initial and terminal double and single-limb support phases in level gait
 10

	Phase	AB	UTF	p-value AB-UTF	ES r AB-UTF
relative time shift [%]	IDS_P	1.2 (1.5)	6.3 (4.8)	0.000*	0.79
	SS_P	1.8 (2.6)	5 (5.8)	0.026	0.44
	TDS_P	1.2 (1.5)	-0.5 (4.1)	0.318	0.2
	SS_I	1.8 (2.6)	3.7 (2)	0.028	0.44

IDS_P: Initial double-limb support, prosthetic-limb leading limb, SS_P: Single-limb support with prosthetic-limb, TDS_P: Terminal double-limb support, prosthetic-limb trailing limb, SS_I: Single-limb support with intact-limb AB: able-bodied group, UTF: group with unilateral transfemoral amputation, ES r: Effect size

* indicates significant difference between AB and UTF group, Bonferroni-corrected $p=0.013$

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 12
 13 **Discussion**
 14 The aim of the current study was to assess the efficacy of the application of an inverted pendulum
 15 model to the overground gait of individuals with UTF. The prosthetic limb of individuals with
 16 UTF more closely replicates the characteristics of a rigid segment than does an intact leg, due
 17 primarily to the non-articulation or reduced articulation of the prosthetic knee during stance and
 18 also the mechanical nature of prosthetic componentry making up a large proportion of the

1 affected limb. However constrained movement in the prosthetic ankle joint may act against the
2 inverted pendulum model. Therefore, it is not intuitively clear, whether the inverted pendulum
3 model would represent UTF gait well. The results of the current study partially support the
4 hypothesis that the inverted pendulum model would be applied similarly to both AB gait and
5 UTF gait during intact-limb stance, but less so during prosthetic-limb stance. As hypothesised,
6 the magnitude of relative time shifts between CoM height and velocity maxima and minima in
7 the AB group were consistently close to zero across all phases of the gait cycle, indicating that an
8 inverted pendulum model is a reasonable estimation of AB gait. In the UTF group, the relative
9 time shifts were not consistent across all phases of the gait cycle and showed an increased
10 relative time shift for IDS_P, during which the prosthetic-limb was being loaded, compared to the
11 gait phases in which the prosthetic-limb was in single-limb support, terminal double-limb
12 support, or in swing. During IDS_P, the maximum CoM forwards velocity occurred after the
13 minimum CoM height, as has been reported previously in individuals with UTT (12). The IDS_P
14 was the only phase showing a statistically significant increase in relative time shift between the
15 CoM height and forward velocity maxima and minima for the UTF group, compared to the AB
16 group. This suggested that whilst an inverted pendulum model of gait could be applied
17 appropriately to AB gait, this was not generally the case in the UTF group, especially during the
18 IDS_P phase. However, the lowest observed relative time shift in the UTF group also occurred
19 during prosthetic-limb stance, during TDS_P. During TDS_P, UTF gait appeared to function in
20 accordance with the inverted pendulum model in a way most like that of the AB group, with
21 maximum CoM velocity occurring almost synchronously with minimum CoM height (median

1 difference - 0.5 % gait cycle), therefore the hypothesis that the model would perform less well
2 during prosthetic stance was only partially supported.

3 The results from the current study are similar to that of previous research, where the application
4 of an inverted pendulum model to the gait of individuals with UTT was found to be inappropriate
5 (12). The current study demonstrates that for individuals with UTF, during the IDS_P phase
6 when the prosthetic-limb is being loaded, significant temporal separations between CoM
7 maximum velocity and minimum height occur. This can possibly be explained by an altered
8 loading response knee flexion pattern induced by the prosthetic knee type resulting in minimum
9 CoM height occurring earlier than in the AB group. If this was due to the possible use of the
10 controlled stance phase flexion provided by 7 out of the 10 knee types or due to a locked knee
11 during stance phase cannot be answered by this study. Thus peak CoM velocity is observed
12 whilst the CoM is being elevated in individuals with UTF. Conversely, the two events are
13 coincident in AB individuals, as loading response knee flexion appears to extend the CoM
14 lowering phase in order to allow minimum CoM height to coincide with CoM peak forwards
15 velocity (Figure 1). Similarly, the same direction of temporal offset between minimum CoM
16 height and peak CoM velocity observed in UTT participants, where the CoM is accelerating
17 forwards while it is being elevated (12), may be due to reduced loading response flexion, which
18 typically occurs in such individuals because of impingement of the knee by the socket and the
19 desire to reduce in-socket/residuum torques. Given that both UTF and UTT participants have
20 similar relative time shifts between maximal and minimal CoM displacements and velocities
21 during IDS_P, it would appear reasonable that restricted loading response knee flexion could, at
22 least partially, be an explanation for this temporal offset.

1 During the transition from one leg to the other in AB gait, progression is typically accomplished
2 via positive work through ankle plantarflexion of the trailing leg. Individuals with lower-limb
3 amputation cannot actively generate power at the prosthetic ankle, and hence use a more
4 energetically costly strategy involving positive work at the residual hip during early intact-limb
5 stance (2, 24). All participants in the current study used the same, non-articulating energy storing
6 and returning prosthetic foot device, so (lack of) power generation at the prosthetic ankle was
7 likely similar for all. However, the UTF participants were most divergent from the inverted
8 pendulum model during IDS_P, when the intact-limb was pushing off. This suggests that it is the
9 leading, weight accepting limb that modulates the timing of CoM maximum velocity and
10 minimum height during double-limb support and ultimately, adherence to the inverted pendulum
11 model of gait. While a large body of research focuses on the (lack of) propulsion provided during
12 TDS_P, the results of the current study point at the reduction in passive and eccentric work
13 during IDS_P also being an important factor in the higher metabolic cost of gait experienced by
14 individuals with lower-limb amputation. Increased energy expenditure has been proposed to be
15 associated with disruptions in energy transformations within the inverted pendulum model (16),
16 which would support this supposition. There are no supporting data, but our suggestion would be
17 that while a lack of active work at the prosthetic ‘ankle’ during late stance undoubtedly
18 contributes to the previously reported increased metabolic cost of walking in individuals with
19 lower limb amputation (9, 10), the lack of passive, or eccentric, energy absorption during early
20 and mid-stance does so too. This suggestion is supported by a previous finding in individuals
21 with UTT, who experienced a significant reduction in mechanical work, per meter travelled, done
22 at the intact leg when they used a hydraulically articulating ankle foot device that absorbed more

1 energy during early stance, and returned less energy during late stance, than their customary, non-
2 articulating prosthetic feet (25). This should certainly be the subject of future study.

3 Finally, as impairments in gait function seem to be reflected by compliance, or lack of, to the
4 inverted pendulum model, the resulting relative time shift might be of clinical relevance. For
5 example, the size of the relative time shifts between CoM height and velocity maxima and
6 minima could potentially be used as a tool to quantify the efficacy of innovative prosthetic device
7 design features aimed at reducing the metabolic cost of walking and improving gait efficiency in
8 individuals with amputation.

9 It has to be kept in mind, that while a high standardization of used components is wished for, it
10 often does not reflect reality. While all participants used the same type of ankle device, a
11 variation of knee components were used and possible individual specific gait patterns induced by
12 specific knee components were not considered. Additionally it has to be kept in mind, that the
13 results reflect the gait using a rigid ankle device which does not reflect the nature of the inverted
14 pendulum as such that the pendulum pivots over a rotation center, which could also explain the
15 increased time shift in the initial prosthetic double support phase.

16 In conclusion results from the current study demonstrate that during level walking, an inverted
17 pendulum model represents AB gait well, but deviation to the model were seen in parts of the
18 UTF gait. In addition, UTF gait functioned mechanically most like AB gait during prosthetic-
19 limb single and terminal double-limb support and intact-limb single-limb support. Divergence
20 from inverted pendulum behaviour during the initial prosthetic double-limb support phase
21 following prosthetic-limb IC indicates that it is the loading limb that primarily modulates timing
22 of CoM maximum velocity and minimum height, rather than the unloading limb. These findings

1 may also help explain the increased metabolic cost of walking, compared to the able-bodied, in
2 individuals with UTF. This relationship should be further investigated.

3 Word count: 2835

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7 providing the foot-component for the two UTF participants measured in Salzburg. Endolite
8 Deutschland GmbH had no role in the study conception and design; in the collection, analysis
9 and interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript; and in the decision to submit the
10 manuscript for publication.

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- 42

1 Figure Headings

2 Figure 1: Mean forward CoM velocity (dotted lines) and CoM height relative to the CoM position
3 at initial contact (solid lines) for all AB (black lines) and UTF (grey lines) participants throughout
4 a normalised gait cycle during level walking. Initial and terminal Double-limb support (IDS,
5 TDS) and single-limb support (SS) phases are indicated by solid vertical lines, the relative time
6 shift between maximum and minimum positions is shown as shaded areas.

7

8 Figure 2: Boxplots of relative time shift between extreme values of CoM height and CoM
9 forward velocity in the initial and terminal double-limb support (IDS_P and TDS_P) and single-
10 limb support (SS_P and SS_I) phase of level gait.

11 Note: UTF = participant with unilateral transfemoral amputation, AB = able bodied participant,
12 IC = initial contact, TDS = terminal double-limb support, P = prosthetic-limb, I = intact-limb, R
13 = right limb, L = left limb, * indicates significant difference ($p < 0.050$), r = effect size, s =
14 small, m = medium, l = large

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