

## Children and Adolescent Foot Care



Children and adolescents are affected by many of the same foot conditions that adults are. The significance of children's foot problems lies in the fact that throughout childhood, normal bone and muscle growth changes.

As you watch your baby grow and develop, remember to pay close attention to your baby's feet. A child's feet grow rapidly during the first year, reaching almost half their adult foot size. This is why foot specialists consider the first year to be the most important in the development of the feet. Look carefully at your baby's feet. Seek the advice of your family podiatric physician if you notice any abnormalities. Many adult foot problems have their origins in childhood and are present at birth.

Don't wait until your child begins to walk to care for a problem you noticed earlier.

Teach your children about proper body and foot care.

- Wash your feet well and dry between the toes
- Air your shoes at night
- Wash sneakers often or clean shoes and boots
- Get mum, dad or whoever looks after you to teach you how to cut your toenails the right way
- Check your feet for bumps, itchy bits, cuts and blisters and let your parents know if your feet hurt
- It's especially important to keep feet clean if you are heading into puberty. That is when the sweat glands, especially in your feet, roar into full production, and you may not be too nice to be near if you don't work hard at keeping clean!

Evaluation and management of children's foot problems commonly treated in our office include



In-toeing and out-toeing

Pediatric heel pain

Sports and fitness injuries

Overuse syndrome in adolescent athletes

Bunions in children

Overpronation (flat feet)

Nail problems and fungus infections

Plantar warts

## PEDIATRIC FOOT & CLEAT INJURIES

### WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW

**10%** of all injuries seen in the ER are ankle sprains

**83%** of ankle injuries are diagnosed as ligament sprains with incomplete tears

*Not all fields are created equal:*  
**90%** of ankle sprains are due to poor field conditions

Flat feet or a rigid arch and use of improper or worn-out footwear may increase the risk of developing shin splints

In football, the foot and ankle account for 16% of all injuries

Overuse injuries include Achilles tendonitis and stress fractures

Rubber cleats are not necessary for children under 10 – use an all-purpose sports shoe

Metal spikes should not be used until teenage years

The ankle is the second most common site of injury in baseball players after the shoulder

Pediatric heel pain is very different from adult heel pain; it does not get better with walking around

Generally, injuries seen in younger athletes fall in three categories:

**1**

Injuries related to growth

**2**

Overuse injuries

**3**

Acute presentations

When is a sprain really bad?   Sprains are classified in three categories:		
FIRST DEGREE	SECOND DEGREE	THIRD DEGREE
<p><b>Tissue is only stretched</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slight swelling</li> <li>Mild loss of range of motion and strength</li> <li>No decrease in stability</li> </ul>	<p><b>Involves stretching and some tearing of tissue</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderate swelling</li> <li>Usually includes some bruising</li> <li>Moderate loss of range of motion and strength</li> <li>Some decrease in stability</li> </ul>	<p><b>Complete tearing of tissue</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant swelling and bruising</li> <li>Near complete loss of range of motion and strength</li> <li>Marked decrease in stability</li> </ul>

**The heel is where it's at** | Sever's disease is a common cause of heel pain in growing kids, physically active kids.

The most important thing to know about Sever's disease is that, with proper care, the condition usually goes away in under two months. Early diagnosis, proper care, and taking measures to protect the heel can help protect against future problems.

