

Podiatry Department

Take a Step in the



A Walk Through Guide for
Parents and Carers
of a Child/Children/Young Person



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General Foot Care



Encouraging children to take good care of their feet is important. Teaching good foot care can help prevent a number of problems and help keep feet healthy and in good condition.



Encourage children to wash their feet daily, remembering to get in between the toes. Teach children to dry their feet properly, especially between the toes, to avoid a build up of moisture.



Ensure fresh, clean socks - cotton and not nylon - are worn every day.



Cut/trim nails regularly, preferably after a bath or shower when the nails are soft. Use proper nail clippers/scissors and never cut them too short or down the side.



Check your child's feet regularly for any signs of foot problems.

Footwear

Footwear is important in supporting your child's feet and can help prevent problems occurring.

Your child's feet should be measured regularly to ensure that they are wearing the correct size shoes. Choose shoes that give all round support. Look for heel support as well as good support from laces/buckle/Velcro. The child should have room to move their toes.

Choose the right shoe for the activity and time of year where possible, try and alternate shoes so your child is not wearing the same shoes daily.



Children with Diabetes

If your child has diabetes it is important to teach him/her to pay extra attention to their feet. Ensuring your child has good control of their diabetes, educating and encouraging them to keep their feet healthy at an early age will help as they get older.

Encourage your child to get to know their feet and if they discover a problem with their feet or have any pain or discomfort please make an appointment for an assessment with your podiatrist.



Common Foot Problems

Ingrown Toe Nails



These are nails that have grown into the skin, usually down one or both sides of the nail. There are many causes of an ingrown nail including nails that have been cut too short, damaged nails by playing sports or poor fitting footwear.

Ingrown nails are usually quite painful especially when wearing shoes, or if the toe is accidentally knocked. The skin around the toe can look swollen and inflamed and is often hot to the touch. It may also leak yellow fluid called pus.

If your child has an ingrown toe nail make an appointment with a podiatrist to arrange treatment.

Verrucaes

Verrucaes are a viral infection that results in a build up of hard skin. Your child can pass them on so they shouldn't share towels and you should clean baths and showers after use. Your child is more likely to catch a verruca if they are barefoot in communal areas

If your child has a verruca and it is not sore or causing any discomfort, then it can be left untreated and it will clear itself in time. Only if it is painful then you should arrange to see a podiatrist who will recommend treatments.

Blisters

Blisters tend to occur when the feet become hot and sweaty and start to rub on the inside of the shoe or sock. This can happen during active play, running, walking, and other sports.

The rubbing causes friction and fluid fills up in a space within the layers of the skin. They can be quite painful and sore but will heal by themselves.

Athletes Foot

Athlete's Foot is a skin infection caused by a fungus like a verruca. Your child is more likely to develop athlete's foot if they are barefoot in communal areas like swimming pools.

To prevent Athlete's Foot it is recommended to wear non-slip footwear in changing areas, and change socks once a day (more often if your child suffers from sweaty feet) and alternate footwear if possible.

It's helpful to take shoes and socks off when at home to allow the air to circulate around feet if they tend to be sweaty.

Symptoms of athletes foot include a burning and itchy sensation and the skin may be red, broken and can be flaky and sometimes soggy between the toes.

It can be seen on other areas of the foot as dry skin like verrucas,

If your child has Athlete's Foot please make an appointment with a podiatrist for advice and treatment.

Biomechanical Concerns

Biomechanics is the term used for how the feet and lower limbs move. It's not uncommon as children's feet and legs grow and develop for parents to have concerns. Most biomechanical issues seen in young children are due to their bodies still in growth stages, and usually correct themselves. However if you have concerns, or your child is experiencing pain or discomfort then you should arrange for an assessment with a podiatrist.

