

CHILDREN'S FOOTCARE



LFW Podiatry

Children's feet are complex and constantly developing, making proper foot care essential in their growth and development. From birth through to adolescence, children's feet undergo significant changes.



Our role at LFW Podiatry is to ensure these changes are healthy and provide guidance on keeping little feet in optimal shape.



Our clinics offer a calm and inviting atmosphere, and our podiatrists are skilled in working with children. Youngsters will feel at ease during their appointments.



Put your hand up if you'd like to book an appointment at LFW Podiatry.

Keep reading to discover the key signs and symptoms to watch for when it comes to your child's foot health.



WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

Common Foot Problems in Children

Early intervention can prevent many foot issues from becoming chronic. Here are some common problems:

- **Flat Feet:** Occurs when the arch doesn't form properly or collapses. Treatment includes arch supports, orthotics, and strengthening exercises. Generally, not problematic unless painful.
- **Ingrown Toenails:** The toenail grows into the skin, causing pain and infection. Trim nails straight across, wear proper footwear, and keep feet clean. Treatment may involve nail surgery if infected.
- **Plantar Warts (verruucas):** Caused by HPV, often from walking barefoot in public areas. Treatment includes Verrutop (in clinic) and topical medications.
- **Sever's Disease:** Heel growth plate inflammation due to repetitive activity, common during growth spurts. Rest, ice, heel pads, and stretching can help.
- **Toe Walking:** Persistent toe walking after age 2 may indicate tight Achilles tendons or other issues. Treatment can include stretching exercises, physical therapy, or orthotics.

Proper Foot Hygiene

Good foot hygiene prevents infections and odour:

- **Daily Washing:** Wash feet with soap and water, drying thoroughly, especially between the toes.
- **Nail Care:** Trim nails straight across to prevent ingrown toenails.
- **Moisturising:** Apply moisturiser to dry feet, but avoid lotion between toes to prevent fungal growth.
- **Socks:** Choose moisture-wicking socks for active kids and change them daily.

**TO BOOK AN APPOINTMENT:
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RESOURCE PAGE

Development of Children's Feet

Children's feet differ from adults' as they are soft and flexible at birth, with bones made of cartilage that gradually turn to bone. Here's an overview of key developmental stages:

- Birth to 1 Year: Babies are born with flat feet, and the arch develops as they begin walking. Early footwear should be soft and flexible to allow free movement.
- 1 to 3 Years: As toddlers walk, foot muscles and bones strengthen, and the arch continues to form.
- 3 to 5 Years: Foot shape begins to resemble an adult's, though arches may still develop with regular activity.
- 6 to 12 Years: Feet continue developing, and most children have fully formed arches by age 10. Proper care and footwear are important.
- Teens (13+ Years): Growth plates close, and foot development nears completion, though some may still experience growing pains.

The Foot: Infancy to Adulthood

It will take approximately 18 years for a child's foot to fully develop. At birth, the foot contains 22 partially developed bones. By school age, this number will increase to 45. Over the next 13-14 years, many of these will fuse together to form 26 bones that make up a mature adult foot.

Footwear: Choosing the Right Shoes for Children

Proper footwear is essential for healthy foot development. Here are guidelines for selecting the right shoes:

- Infants & Toddlers (0-2 years): Allow barefoot time for natural development. When shoes are needed, choose soft, flexible ones that support movement.
- Preschoolers (3-5 years): Look for flexible, lightweight shoes with a roomy toe box. Mild arch support is helpful but avoid excessive correction unless advised by a podiatrist.
- School-Aged Children (6-12 years): Choose shoes with stability and cushioning for active kids. Ensure a good fit with enough room for the toes to move.
- Teens (13+ years): Select activity-specific shoes for sports. Regularly check the fit for comfort and support, as feet may still be growing.

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