

When to Worry About Your Kids' Feet

Kids Don't Complain About Foot Problems

- They tend to just keep going
- It's up to parents to be aware
 - Check out the child's feet
 - Observe the child's functioning

Not Always What it Appears To Be

- The problem may be originating somewhere else
- A simple problem today might lead to something worse in the future

Main Categories of Foot Problems

- Dermatological (skin & nails)
- Biomechanical (functioning)
- Sports-related

Dermatological Foot Problems

- Occur on the skin & nails
- Check out your child's feet

Plantar Warts

- Occur on the bottom of the foot
- Caused by a virus
- Children susceptible due to developing immune system
- Avoid going barefoot in public places
- See a foot and ankle surgeon for treatment

Ingrown Toenails

- Nail is curved and grows into the skin
- Can cause pain, redness, swelling, warmth in toe
- Common causes
 - Improper cutting
 - Wearing cleats
- Sometimes can be treated at home
 - Room-temperature soaks and gentle massage
- If infected or not improving, seek medical help

Other Potential Dermatological Concerns

- Dry, cracked skin
- Foreign bodies
- Patchy, scaly skin
- Swelling of the toes

Biomechanical Foot Problems

- Problems with bones, muscles, joints, ligaments or nerves
- Observe functioning
- Inspect the feet
- Be aware of red flags

Red Flag #1: Not Keeping Up with Other Kids

- Child avoids or has difficulties with physical activity
- Could be signs of foot or non-foot problems
- Seek medical advice

Red Flag #2: Not Meeting Milestones

- Not crawling or walking at the upper range of normal
- Seek medical advice

Red Flag #3: Not Walking or Running Normally

- Problems or abnormalities with gait or stride
- May indicate a neurological condition
- Seek medical advice

Red Flag #4: Can't Find Shoes that Fit

- Length and width should fit
- Shouldn't cause blisters
- Should be an age-appropriate size
- If can't find well-fitting shoes, see a foot and ankle surgeon

Children's Growth Plate & Biomechanical Issues

- Children are sensitive to biomechanical problems
 - Their growth plates are open until early teens
- Easier to correct problems with open growth plates
- The earlier a child is treated, the better

Sports-Related Conditions in Children

- Sever's disease
- Other conditions

Sever's Disease

- Inflammation of the heel's growth plate
- Often caused by overuse and stress
 - Soccer, track, basketball, etc.
- Signs and symptoms
 - Pain in the back or bottom of the heel
 - Limping
 - Walking on toes
 - Difficulty participating in activities
- Requires treatment

Three Keys to Remember

- Check out your child's feet on a regular basis
- Observe your child's functioning
- Be on the lookout for red flags

For Good Outcomes, Know When to Seek Care

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