

# Children's feet



Foot problems in children can have serious effects on gait and mobility and, if left untreated or not referred to a podiatrist, can carry through to adulthood. Active lifestyles coupled with growth create constantly changing conditions for kid's feet, which can result in injury, infection and biomechanical problems impacting the entire body.

## Common Problems

### Flat or pronated feet:

Over-pronation, characterised by inward rolling of the feet and ankles, either as a result of flat feet or other causes can result in ankle, knee, hip and lower back injuries with serious implications for long-term gait and biomechanics. These conditions sometimes resolve with age, however prescriptive orthotics are recommended to provide support and prevent serious damage and long-term ill effects on the rest of the body.

### Severs Disease:

In teens, pain around the back of the heels is commonly a sign of Severs disease, a condition caused by the Achilles tendon placing extra strain on the heel bone which leads to swelling in the growth plate around the heel. Severs disease will ultimately resolve as the growth plate around the heel eventually develops and fuses by approximately age 15 but damaging foot problems can occur during this time through altered biomechanics. Early treatment and advice can relieve discomfort and prevent the incidence of additional injury.

### Osgood-Schlatters:

This variant of knee pain is often caused by poor biomechanics of the lower leg. The prescription of corrective orthotics can reduce or eliminate pain.

### Ingrown Toenails:

Ingrown toenails can be present at birth and are common in growing feet, particularly as shoes become too tight. Clinical treatment is recommended to avoid infection and minor surgery may be required for more serious cases.

### Viruses and fungal infections:

Warts and Athlete's foot are the most common viruses and fungal infections affecting children. The prevalence of these conditions is due to unsanitary conditions at swimming pools and similar environments where viruses and fungus can easily be contracted by walking barefoot on wet floors.

Conditions including in-toeing and out-toeing, bowed legs and knock knees are all seen in varying degrees in children under the age of 4 years. Early assessment, diagnosis and (if needed) treatment of these conditions are crucial to avoid long-term biomechanical problems.



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If you have any questions regarding any of the above information please feel free to contact Rachael at Pod Co Podiatry

• [www.podcopodiatry.com](http://www.podcopodiatry.com) • [rachael@podcopodiatry.com](mailto:rachael@podcopodiatry.com) •

336 Milleara Road, Avondale Heights, 3034, Phone 03 9337 8737, Fax 03 9337 3012

24 Ascot Vale Road, Flemington, 3031, Phone 03 9376 4666, Fax 03 9376 4777