

# When to Worry About Your Kids' Feet



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# Kids Don't Complain About Foot Problems

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- 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



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# Not Always What it Appears To Be

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



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# Main Categories of Foot Problems

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



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# Dermatological Foot Problems

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



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# Plantar Warts

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- 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

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- Nail is curved and grows into the skin
- Can cause pain, redness, swelling, warmth in toe
- ~~Common~~ **Common causes**
  - 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

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



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# Biomechanical Foot Problems

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- 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

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- 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

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



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# Red Flag #3: Not Walking or Running Normally

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



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

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- 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

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



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# Sports-Related Conditions in Children

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- Sever's disease
- Other conditions



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# Sever's Disease

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- 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

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



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# For Good Outcomes, Know When to Seek Care

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