



# KID'S FEET AND FOOTWEAR

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# CHILDREN'S FEET

Problems with your child's feet could become problems for life if not treated early. Foot problems can lead to knee, hip and back pain that can have serious consequences on your child's development and posture.

Bones and joints in children are constantly growing and are not fully developed until adulthood. They are also flexible and can be twisted and distorted without your child feeling pain.

Incorrect movement and untreated foot conditions can cause soft bones to develop abnormally with potential for lifelong problems for your child's feet, and other parts of the body'

## Common foot problems;

**Heel pain:** Heel pain can occur in growing children, usually between the ages of eight and 13, as they increase their sporting activities.

Heel pain that limits activity or is present all the time should be checked by a podiatrist.



**Skin and nail problems:** Some conditions such as ingrown toenails, tinea and warts, require treatment from a podiatrist, while others may require advice by a podiatrist around hygiene or shoes.

# FOOTWEAR

Foot problems may be a result of injury, deformity, illness or inherited factors. Inappropriate footwear can aggravate these pre-existing conditions, or even cause new problems.

## The role of shoes

Footwear is required for protection and should protect feet from; injury, infection, cold and heat, whilst still allowing freedom and mobility.

Shoes should also provide the right support for the kind of activity being planned.



**SPORT**



**SCHOOL**

## Poorly fitting shoes

It is a concerning fact that many children by their teens may suffer foot problems, associated with ill-fitting shoes.

Signs of poorly fitting shoes include; blisters, abrasions, corns, calluses and ingrown toenails.

Shoes which fit poorly because they are too narrow, too short, too big or inappropriate, can cause discomfort, injury and even permanent damage.



## BUYING FOOTWEAR

Buy shoes with your child present to try them on and from a store with a good reputation for fitting shoes.

Each foot varies in size, ask your sales assistant to measure the length and width of each foot standing. Don't go by the size of previous shoes.

Get your child to try on both shoes and encourage them to walk around the store. Shoes should fit comfortably immediately, a 'break in' period should not be required.

Shoes should provide the right support for the kind of activity being planned.

The most expensive shoes will not necessarily be the best for your child's feet.

If your child frequently takes off their shoes this may be a sign that the shoes are uncomfortable, but it is not always reliable as problems may still exist without indication.





## FITTING CHECK LIST

Use the list and check your child's shoes on a regular basis to ensure they fit properly.

- The shoe fits well front, back and sides.
- The widest part of the shoe corresponds to the widest part of your child's foot.
- The shoe bends at the ball of the foot.
- Your child's heels should not slip out of their shoes when walking.
- There is ~1 cm, or a finger width gap between the longest toe and the end of the shoe.
- The shoe has laces, velcro straps or a buckle.
- The shoe is made out of a breathable material.
- Is your child wearing the right shoe for the right activity?
- The shoe has a firm heel counter (rigid material around the heel) to provide support.
- The toe box should provide enough space for the toes to wiggle.



## PROFESSIONAL ADVICE

**A check-up with Podiatry Services SA  
is recommended if:**

- You notice uneven shoe wear
- You notice any skin rashes, hard skin lumps or bumps on your child's feet
- Your child complains of recurrent pain in the feet and/or legs
- Your child is constantly tripping or falling
- Or you have any other concerns about your child's feet