



Common Childhood Foot Complications

As early as birth, foot complications can present themselves in children. Some complications, such as flatfoot and ingrown toenails, can be inherited or caused in the womb. Others can occur as children begin their walk through life, from the occasional fall to an injury suffered playing a sport. No matter the cause or severity of the problem the health of a child's feet should not be taken for granted.

However, according to an American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA) survey of parents with children under the age of 18, only 35 percent said that they would not be motivated to take their child to a doctor's office for foot or leg pain treatment. Furthermore, only 25 percent of those surveyed would take their child to see a podiatrist—a foot and specialist. Member podiatrists from the APMA can help make sure your child stays on their feet by offering expert medical diagnosis and treatment options for all issues associated with the feet. From the time a child begins to walk, they should be seen by a podiatrist who can make sure his/her feet are progressing normally, especially if there is a family history of foot problems. The following chart details common inherited and developmental foot complications in children, possible signs and symptoms and treatment options. To locate an APMA member podiatrist specializing in pediatric foot health, visit www.apma.org and click on 'Find a Podiatric Physician'. Pictures of these complications can be found at www.apma.org/pediatrics.

Complication	Sign(s) & Symptom(s)	Podiatrist Recommended Treatments
Clubfoot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hooked foot that twists inward and downward 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Casting Surgery in more severe cases
Metatarsus Adductus (MTA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Front of foot bent inward at the instep resembling the letter "C" Excessive tripping when walking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stretching exercises Shoe options that are straight Serial casting Surgery in more severe cases
Polydactyl (Multiple Toes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eleventh or twelfth toe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove extra toes if they interfere with walking or wearing shoes
Syndactyl (Webbed Toes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skin fails to separate between the toes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surgical separation of webbed toes
Flatfoot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pain Slow walking Difficulty keeping up with other children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Custom foot orthotics Change in the type of shoe Surgery in some cases
In-toeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One or both feet point inward Tripping Sitting on knees in "W" position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exercises (first position ballet, sitting Indian style, riding "big wheel") Casting Bracing
Achilles Tendonitis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pain with activity at the back of the leg and heel Swelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rest Icing Stretching Physical therapy Heel lifts Custom foot orthotics Soft casting

Complication	Sign(s) & Symptom(s)	Podiatrist Recommended Treatments
Stress fracture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain • Swelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immobilization • Surgery
Sever's disease(heel pain)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain with side-to-side pressure of the heel • Pain with activity • Pain with soccer or baseball cleats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rest • Ice • Shoe change
Toe-Walkers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking on toes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stretching exercises • Neurological exam • Surgery in severe cases
Plantar fasciitis (heel pain)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain when standing or walking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stretching • Arch supports • Custom foot orthotics •
Ankle/Foot fracture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain in the area of fracture • Protruding bone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Casting • Rehabilitation
Ankle sprain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain • Swelling • Bruising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immobilization • Casting • Bracing
Plantar Warts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Painful thickening of the skin • Hard and flat, elevated surface most often on the sole of the foot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild acids • Lasers • Freezing temperature • Surgical removal • Medication