

Is Your Child Experiencing These Problems?



It's incredibly important to deal with foot and ankle pain at a young age. Your feet are what carry you for your whole life. It's important to build a strong foundation for your body. If you don't have that strong foundation you may develop knee, hip, back, and shoulder pain, just from problems in your feet.

In a young child's feet the bones are soft and more apt to develop deformities with abnormal pressure. This includes wearing shoes that are too tight, which may halt development. In the first year of life a child's foot develops to almost half the size of an adult's foot. This first year is critical to their development.

While a child is growing it is very important to change shoes and socks sizes every few months. This gives their feet the room to grow and develop that they need. Shoes should also be flexible and comfortable for the child. You should be aware of your child's walking pattern in order to catch any underlying defect or condition. We are able to treat foot and ankle conditions and address any concerns you may have.

Sports injuries are on the rise in children as more and more become actively involved. One of the most common sports injuries are ankle sprains. X-rays are often the best way to detect any fracture or break, which can be treated with a fiberglass cast. There are other treatment options for ankle sprains such as soft casts and pneumatic walking splints that help treat both ankle and foot problems. Soft casts can be used for fractures and are more comfortable than fiberglass casts. It allows more movement, but still provides support. A pneumatic

walking splint immobilizes the foot and ankle, but still allows the patient to walk with the splint on. After patients are taken out of a boot or a splint, a light or structurally sturdy ankle brace is usually dispensed to them.

After a full recovery from an ankle sprain the ligaments are still weakened. Custom made and over the counter orthotics can help provide the support needed to the weak ankle. Our over the counter orthotics can be dispensed directly to the patient. These orthotics are low cost if they are not already covered by insurance. Physical therapy is also an important step in the recovery process so that your child can get back onto the field as soon as possible.

Heel and arch pain is a major condition treated in the podiatric world. Heel and arch pain are usually symptoms of an underlying issue. Heel pain is often felt by 8-14 year olds because their feet are still growing and developing. During the growth their heel bone is weak and any stress put on it can often cause this pain. Heel and arch pain can be treated with orthotics. If this pain is not treated during childhood years later on they will experience worse pain. Treatment with orthotics is often a way to keep children with heel and arch pain from seeing an orthopedist for these problems later in life.

Limb length discrepancy is often a problem experienced by young children. This problem is simply when one leg is longer than the other leg. The difference can be anywhere from 1 centimeter to more than 6 centimeters. The greater the difference the more the patient has to compensate in their walking technique, posture, etc. Leaving this untreated can lead to many problems including back, ankle, and hip problems. Orthotics can help to correct any walking and posture changes. A simple adjustment to an orthotic can help to easily treat any length discrepancy.

Another common issue experienced by many children is called knock-knees which is when your knees touch but your ankles are not touching. This becomes apparent from age 2-3 and gets progressively worse until age 4. This can develop when a child is learning to walk and is trying to achieve balance. Sometimes it only occurs in one knee. Leaving knock-knees untreated can result in difficulty running and walking. Knock-knee can be treated with braces.

Often night braces are used to correct the position of the knee. In toe and out toe are 2 of the most common gait issues. This type of gait, or walking, causes abnormal stresses on the foot and ankle as well as hip, knee, and back. Many deformities in the foot such as flatfoot and a high arch foot can cause a weakening of musculature. There are multiple types of braces can help a patient walk better. Sometimes the muscle of the upper leg and torso are weakened by the foot deformity; certain types of physical therapy and muscular strengthening exercises need to be addressed.

Toe walkers don't land on their heels when walking; because of it certain muscles in the back of the foot, leg and ankle area become very tight and certain stretching exercises will help along with certain types of braces. The shoe a child wears is extremely important to the way they land on their foot and need to be evaluated.

There are many common concerns over the type of walking pattern, pains, etc that children experience during growth. It is important to have these problems evaluated by a podiatrist so that this problem does not turn into a long-term malady. It's important to keep a close watch on these issues because often time there is a quick fix.