

## **Flat feet common among children**

Young children are often flat-footed. This is a common condition, and does not mean a child with flat feet will be flat-footed for life, although many parents believe this to be the case.

Flat-footedness occurs when the arch of the foot collapses when the child is standing. This is because the ligaments which hold the bones in the right position are not yet strong enough to do so. That explains why the arch reappears when the child stands in a tip-toe position. This kind of flat-footedness is known as the “flexible” kind, and does not need medical treatment. It does not cause pain to the child and will correct itself over time.

The other kind of flat-footedness is known as the “rigid” kind. That is when the arch does not reappear when the child tiptoes.

Children with this condition experience pain or tiredness when walking or running for long periods. Using shoe inserts can relieve the discomfort, but surgery may be needed to correct the condition.

A tight heel cord is another cause of flat-footedness. In this case, physical therapy may be recommended to loosen the heel cord.