


Foot Arch Development

How do the arches of the foot develop?

 Arches are formed by:

- The shape of the foot bones
- The muscles in the foot
- The bands that connect the bones together (the ligaments)
- The bands that connect the muscles to the bones (the tendons)



What to expect as my child grows

Birth to Age 2 - Flat Feet are Normal



- Babies appear flat footed because they are born with a thick, soft fat pad on the bottom of the foot
- Ligaments and muscles are still very loose, which makes the foot very flexible and allows it to flatten out when standing
- Arches are not visible yet

Age 3 to 5 - Arches Begin to Take Shape



- Muscles and ligaments strengthen as children run, jump, and climb
- The fat pad thins out, making the arch easier to see
- Many children still look flat-footed when standing, especially if they are flexible

Ages 6 to 8 - The Arch Becomes More Defined



- Walking has become mature and the arch typically becomes well formed and clearly visible
- Mild flatness may still be normal, especially in children with flexible joints

Everyday Habits that Support Healthy Foot Development

- 👣 Barefoot play on safe surfaces strengthens foot muscles
- 👟 Good fitting shoes with flexible soles support natural movement
- 🧒 Active play like climbing, running, and jumping builds strength and coordination
- 🌱 Regular shoe size checks ensure comfort as feet grow

👤 When Should You Seek Advice?

- Persistent pain or discomfort in the feet or legs
- Stiff or rigid feet that don't move easily
- One foot looks different from the other
- Feet roll inward significantly and weight falls heavily to the inside border of the foot

👣 Final Thoughts

- Healthy foot development is a leisurely stroll, not a race
- Children's feet will develop at their own unique pace
- Flat feet is a normal part of growth and physical development



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