

# CARING FOR BABIES AND CHILDREN'S FEET



For babies & children, it is important to take extra care with foot health to avoid problems and deformities in later life. In the UK it is estimated that around 4 million children wear ill-fitting footwear.

## Babies and Toddlers

Once a child can take unaided strides, then they are ready for their first pair of real shoes. Ensure children wear well-fitting, appropriate footwear fitted by a trained shoe fitter.

If you are concerned about your child's walking, see a podiatrist, GP or health visitor for advice. Things to look out for include if your child hasn't started walking at 18 months, and if their feet are turned out during walking, making them unsteady.



## School Children

When children begin school, inspect their shoes for any unusual wear. See a podiatrist if there is concern, as there may be a problem with your child's feet or their posture in general.

Have your child's feet measured for length and width when buying footwear, and check socks regularly to make sure they are not too tight. For PE & sports, avoid plimsolls and opt for fitted trainers with laces or Velcro fastening to avoid blisters.

Check your child's feet regularly for any symptoms such as inflamed tissue around the nails, or red pressure marks on the foot, as these could be due to ill-fitting shoes.

## Teenagers

Teenagers have naturally sweaty feet, but smelly feet may be an indication of poor hygiene. It is essential to wash and dry feet regularly.

Toenails should be trimmed regularly, as trivial issues can become serious if neglected, e.g. ingrown toenails can become infected if not treated properly.

It is easy to think about fashion over functionality when an impressionable teenager, but many retailers now produce shoes that look good and care for your feet.

**Visit [www.feetforlife.org](http://www.feetforlife.org) for more information about foot health for all ages, choosing shoes for children and where to find a registered podiatrist near you.**