

Contact us

Children's Physiotherapy Direct

Tel: **0300 421 6980**

www.ghc.nhs.uk

0-16 years (or 16-18 in full-time education).

Open Mon-Fri (excluding bank holidays) 9am-12pm.

Gloucestershire Podiatry Service

Appointment and enquiries

Tel: **0300 421 8800**

Your views are important to us. If you need advice or have feedback on a community hospital in Gloucestershire, or on our community health and adult social care services, you can contact one of the advisers from our service experience team.

All enquiries are completely confidential. You can contact us between 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday.

This leaflet can also be supplied in braille, audio format, PDF, large print, easy read and other languages on request.

Telephone: **0300 421 8313** (answerphone available outside office hours)

Email: **experience@ghc.nhs.uk**

Write to: **Patient and Carer Experience Team,
Gloucestershire Health and Care
NHS Foundation Trust, Edward Jenner
Court, 1010 Pioneer Avenue, Gloucester
Business Park, Brockworth,
Gloucester GL3 4AW**



NHS

**Gloucestershire
Health and Care**
NHS Foundation Trust

Flat Feet



Information for patients

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Introduction

A flat foot is when the inside of the foot (the arch) appears reduced or absent in standing. The arch often 'reappears' when sitting with the weight off the foot.

Before the age of 3 years, most children naturally have flat feet. The arch only starts to develop around this age.



The arches in a child's foot should start to develop around the age of 3-4 years. The foot arch should complete most of its development between the ages of 7-10 years.

Unless your child experiences pain or functional difficulties where they are unable to participate in normal daily activities, no treatment (insoles or exercises) is required.



There is a normal variation in arch height across the population, as illustrated above.

Tips to help

Correct (well fitting and supportive) footwear is important for any child to ensure support during periods of growth and development.

Insoles are sometimes prescribed by a podiatrist to help improve foot function or pain by reducing the work of the muscles in the foot and lower leg. They do not cure flat feet and there is no evidence to suggest they can change the foot shape.



Balance: Help your child to practice standing on one leg. Make it harder by playing throwing and catching games or by closing their eyes.



Stretch: Encourage your child to stand facing a wall with their hands on the wall. Ask them to lean forwards towards the wall whilst keeping their heels on the ground. Hold for 30 seconds and repeat 3 times.



Heel raises: Help your child to stand holding onto a support and to push up on their toes. Hold for 30 seconds and repeat 3 times.