Parents keep a close eye on their growing children, watching for proper development and alert for any sign of a problem because small problems can have big implications. Pediatric Flatfoot, a childhood condition that, if left untreated, can result in permanent deformity in adulthood. Flatfoot deformity makes mobility and exercise painful, increasing the risk of reduced cardiovascular health and obesity.

“Parents never want their child to undergo a surgical procedure,” says Mary Crawford, DPM, FACFAS, an Everett, Washington foot and ankle surgeon. “But uncorrected symptomatic flatfoot can lead to chronic pain and instability as the child ages into adulthood. Children will be on their feet for a long time to come. It’s vital to keep those feet healthy. A foot and ankle surgeon can help parents understand the options – surgical and non-surgical – for treating pediatric flatfoot.”

Not all children have symptoms, but others will complain of pain, tenderness or cramping in the foot, leg, and knee. Parents may notice an outward tilting of the heel, awkwardness or clumsiness in walking and difficulty with shoes. Pediatric flatfoot makes participating in activities more difficult, so parents should take note if their child is unable to keep up with playmates, tires easily or voluntarily withdraws from physical activities.

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It’s not what fashion-conscious women want to hear—another warning about high heels. But wearing pump-style shoes often causes significant pain by irritating a common bony deformity on the back of the heel, called ‘pump bump.’ If left untreated, it can lead to bursitis or Achilles tendonitis.

What is Pump Bump?

Pump bump is common in young women who wear high heels almost every day. The rigid back of a pump-style shoe can create pressure that aggravates the heel bone when walking.

The bony enlargement can cause Achilles tendonitis or bursitis due to constant irritation from pump-style shoes. Those with high arches or tight Achilles tendons are especially vulnerable to developing pump bump if they work in high heels.
Still think high heels are worth it? .....continued

The medical term for the disorder is Haglund’s deformity. In addition to the noticeable bump, symptoms include:

- pain where the Achilles tendon attaches to the heel,
- swelling in the back of the heel, and
- redness in the area.

Treating Pump Bump
In the large majority of cases, pump bump is treated non-surgically by reducing inflammation, but this does not get rid of the bony enlargement. Pain relief is the primary treatment goal, so anti-inflammatory medications may be prescribed. Icing the back of the heel reduces swelling, and stretching exercises can relieve tension in the Achilles. Long-term, however, it’s best to avoid wearing high heels, if possible.

If your job requires wearing high-heeled shoes and you’re experiencing symptoms of pump bump, heel lifts placed inside the shoes may offer some relief. Wearing backless shoes or those with soft backs may also help decrease pressure on the area.

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Pediatric Flatfoot .....continued

To diagnose a pediatric flatfoot, a foot and ankle surgeon examines the child’s foot in weight bearing and non-weight bearing positions, both in and out of shoes. The physician also notes how the child walks and evaluates the foot’s range of motion. In some cases, flat feet are associated with issues of the hip and knee, so the physician may examine those as well.

For further detailed analysis, the physician may order imaging tests such as x-ray, a CT scan, MRI or bone scan. Family history will be evaluated as well, since the presence of flatfoot disorder in the family increases the possibility of flatfoot in the child.

“There are different types of flatfoot deformities,” notes Crawford. “Thorough testing helps us pinpoint the causes of the flatfoot disorder and develop an appropriate treatment plan.”

Pediatric flatfoot can be divided into two categories, flexible and rigid. Flexible flatfoot is characterized by a normal arch when non-weight bearing, or sitting, and disappearance of the arch when standing. There may or may not be symptoms. In the case of rigid flatfoot, however, the arch is stiff and flat when both sitting and standing. In most cases, children with rigid flatfoot display symptoms associated with the condition. In either case, flexible or rigid flatfoot, there are a variety of underlying reasons, requiring different treatments.

Babies often appear to have flat feet due to cramped positioning inside the womb, and the symptoms will abate with time. In other cases, the surgeon recommends stretching exercises or a soft brace for a short period. Children who do not exhibit symptoms typically do not require treatment, but will be monitored and reevaluated periodically by the foot and ankle surgeon.

For children who do exhibit symptoms, the physician may recommend physical therapy, shoe modifications, anti-inflammatory medications like ibuprofen to reduce pain and inflammation, or an orthotic device. This device fits inside the shoe and supports the structure of the foot. In some cases, surgery is the best alternative.

Call for an appointment TODAY.....505.880.1000

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