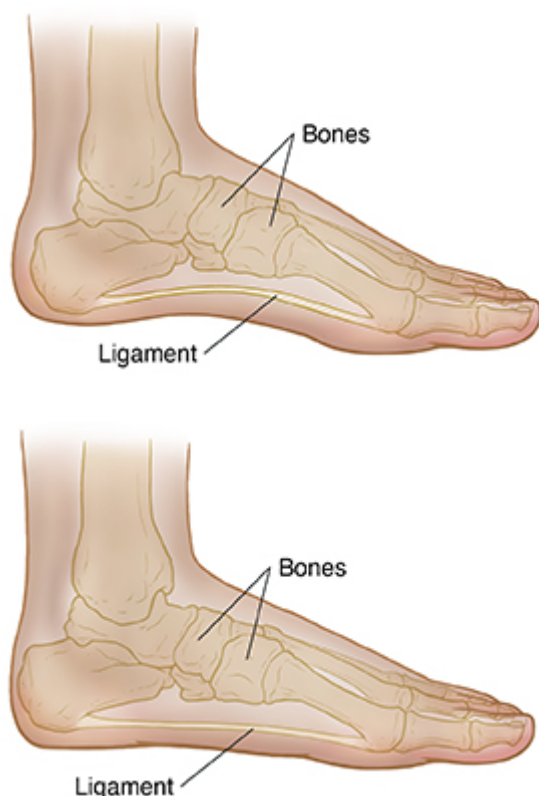


Kid Care: Flat Feet



You may have noticed your child's feet were flat when you saw their footprints in sand. Or you may have noticed this if your child walked on a flat surface with wet feet. The curved parts of the bottom of the feet are called arches. They are like a bridge made of bones joined together by ligaments. They help absorb the shock of walking and spread weight on the feet. Some children develop arches as their baby fat disappears. But some children don't. This is still considered normal. It's often not a cause for concern.



Understanding arch development

Many children's feet have arches when their feet are off the ground. But they may have flat feet when standing. This is due to loose arch-supporting ligaments in the feet. Your child's healthcare provider inspects your child's arches when they're in the air and on a flat surface. If your child has painful flat feet, they may need X-rays to figure out the best type of treatment.

Caring for your child

Over time, your child's feet may or may not develop arches. If not, it won't affect the way your child walks or runs. Your child's healthcare provider may suggest you go ahead and let your child play sports and other activities.

In some cases...

If your child has painful flat feet, the healthcare provider may advise arch supports or special shoe inserts. These can help ease pain. The provider may also advise an orthopedic surgeon if your child has bone problems. Sometimes physical therapy can provide your child with exercises to strengthen loose ligaments and ease pain.

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