

Overview

There are lots of variation and causes of flat feet - Flexible flat feet however are those with a low arch when weight bearing but have a relatively normal arch when not. This is a normal variation and does not usually cause problems and should not stop you doing activities, including sports. However sometimes this 'rolling in' foot posture can cause leg, heel, ankle or midfoot pain. Often there's no obvious cause for flat feet. It might just be the way your feet are and it is often hereditary.



Symptoms

Pain can feel like a dull aching sensation however this can occasionally be sharp in nature. You may notice the area becomes increasingly painful after lots of weight-bearing activities such as walking or running. You may also notice some swelling to the area. Symptoms may be more long standing as we age due to wear and tear of the supporting structures.

Contributing Factors for Pain due to a Flexible Flat Foot;

- Foot posture.
- Overuse – Work & Sport.
- Large changes in exercise – too much too soon.
- Frequent activities on hard or sloped surfaces.
- Tight or weak calf muscles.
- Inappropriate footwear.
- Being overweight.
- Certain inflammatory conditions.



Self-Management for Pain due to a Flexible Flat Foot

Self-management is one of the best ways to control painful symptoms. Try making changes to your current lifestyle using the points below and follow the link for more information.

- Weight loss. <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/start-the-nhs-weight-loss-plan/> (Leaflet available).
- Stretching and balance exercises. (Leaflet available)
- Calf strengthening. (Leaflet available)
- Foot muscle strengthening. (Leaflet available)
- Use supportive footwear. (Leaflet available)



- Strapping and taping. (*Leaflet available*)
- Supportive Insoles. Always build up use of insoles gradually and stop use if you have any new pain.
www.shoeinsoles.co.uk/express-orthotics-firm-density-blue-34-length-insoles.html (*Leaflet available*).
- Modification to lifestyle at home & work – Rest when you can & avoid prolonged activity such as standing, walking and high impact sports.
- Ice may be useful for pain control and to help reduce swelling. (*Leaflet available*)



If your symptoms have not started to improve within 12 weeks or you are having difficulty following the advice. Please contact **Podiatry and Orthotics Department** on **01633 615225 option 1** or email risca.podiatry@wales.nhs.uk

**“This document is available in Welsh /
Mae’r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg”.**