

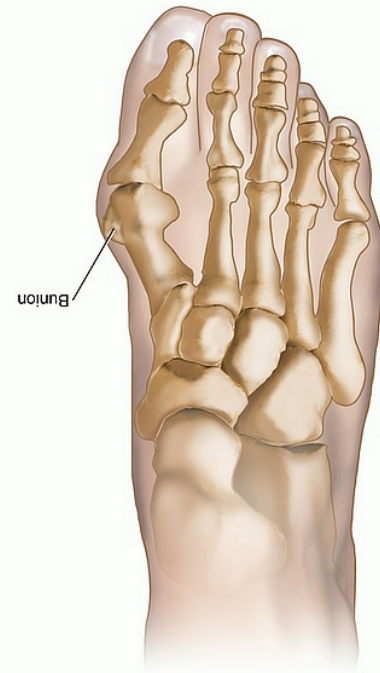
Fact Sheet

Bunions

What is a Bunion?

Bunions appear as a large bump or enlargement of the joint (a lump of bone) on the inside of the foot at the base and side of the big toe.

Medically, a bunion is referred to as hallux valgus or hallux abducto valgus. Hallux means the great toe is drifting outwards on the foot. Abducto valgus refers to the angulation the bunion forms.



Causes

Wearing footwear that is too tight or causing the toes to be squeezed together are the most common blamed factors for the cause of bunions.

Bunions are most widely considered to be due to an imbalance in the forces that is exerted across the joint during walking. This is most likely the reason for the higher prevalence of bunions among women.

Bunions are not inherited, but do tend to run in families. What is inherited is the poor or faulty foot type, that mechanically can lead to the instability around the joint that will eventually lead to bunions – how soon, how quickly and how bad they are or become is varied.

Why Bunions can be painful

The pain is most commonly due to two things – it can be from the pressure of footwear on the bunion or it can be due to arthritis-like pain from the pressure inside the joint. The motion of the joint may be restricted or painful.

A hammer toe of the second toe is common with bunions. Bunions are often painful when walking, can cause skin irritation like corns, callus and blisters. Large bunions can make finding suitable footwear difficult.



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Treatment

Bunions are almost always progressive and tend to get larger and more painful with time.

The initial goal of treatment options is to relieve pressure on the bunion and any symptoms that may be present and to halt or slow the progression of the joint deformity.

There is no effective way to 'get rid of' a bunion without surgery. Management of bunions can include:

- Padding to reduce pressure
- Physical therapy
- Corns and callous treatment
- Footwear advice
- Orthotics
- Exercises

Shoes for Bunions

Footwear plays an important role in the development and symptoms of bunions. A proper fit is extremely important. It is poor fitting footwear in combination with the other factors mentioned above that is the cause of bunions. Footwear also provides the force that makes them painful.

At Highett Podiatry, we can recommend appropriate footwear for bunions.



ALWAYS CONSULT A TRAINED PROFESSIONAL

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