

Fact Sheet

Burning Feet

What is Burning Feet?

Burning feet or hot feet is a common foot complaint, most common in the over 50's and in diabetics who generally experience this sensation at night time. There are many different causes of this condition, but often there are no physical signs associated.

Causes

A burning foot may be mild and local and easily treatable or may indicate a more serious general medical problem that requires further investigation. Burning feet can keep people awake at night and be a source of continuous pain.

The more common causes of burning feet are:

- Aching and burning from being on your feet all day long or from being overweight (mechanical overload).
- Hot and sweaty feet (may be related to mechanical overload problem).
- Neuropathy (nerve damage) that occurs in diabetes.
- Other types of neuropathy (nerve damage) that occurs in chronic alcoholism, vitamin deficiencies (usually Vitamin B) and heavy metal poisoning.
- Nerve entrapments, such as tarsal tunnel syndrome, which is the compression of a nerve at the inside of the ankle joint.
- Bursitis, Morton's Neuroma or some other cause if the burning occurs in the forefront of the foot only.
- Blood & circulatory disorders (eg thrombocytopenia, blood clots, Erythromelalgia, pernicious anemia).
- Hormonal imbalances such as Graves Disease and hyperthyroidism.
- Reflex sympathetic dystrophy or complex regional pain syndrome following trauma (including surgery) .



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Treatment

The cause of the burning feet needs to be established first before the right treatment is recommended. For this reason, a consultation with a Podiatrist, Rheumatologist or a Neurologist is important. A full range of tests may need to be ordered to determine the cause if it is not simply a mechanical overload that is the problem.

Treatment of mechanical overload with foot supports or orthotics may help reduce the extra load on the feet. If the problem is chronic, strategies to help manage the symptoms will need to be discussed.



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ALWAYS CONSULT A TRAINED PROFESSIONAL

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