

Monthly Newsletter

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Going the distance with you!

Latest/ upcoming developments

- All podiatrists are undertaking training and will be able to offer Foot Mobilisation at the practice in due course. (see leaflet at reception)

Contact Your Podiatrist

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Hammertoes

What is a Hammertoe?

A hammertoe is considered a deformity that is caused by your toe bending or curling downward instead of pointing forward.

Any toe on your foot can be affected; however, typically the second and third toes are involved. It is possible for a hammertoe to be present at birth, but it typically develops over time due to arthritis or wearing poorly fitting shoes.

A hammertoe can cause a deal of discomfort, but in most cases they are treatable.

Causes

Each toe contains two joints that allow it to bend at the middle of the toe and at the end of the toe.

When the middle joint becomes dislocated a hammertoe occurs.

Common causes of joint dislocation include the following:

- Injury to the toe
- Arthritis
- High foot arch
- Poorly fit shoes
- Tightened tendons in the foot
- Pressure from a bunion

Symptoms

A hammertoe can cause discomfort upon trying to stretch or move the affected toe or those around it and while walking.

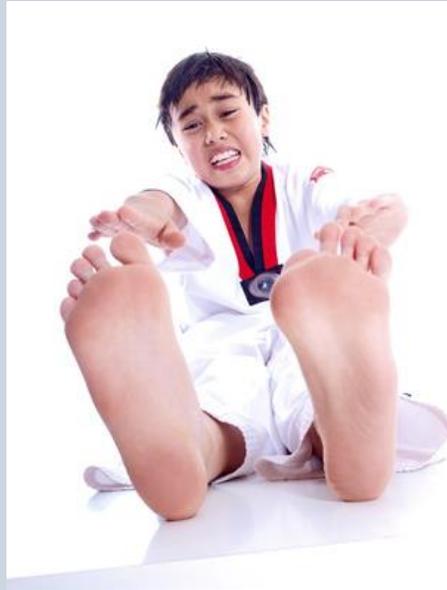
Symptoms associated with a hammertoe can be mild or severe.

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Hammer toes can cause discomfort

Hammer toes (Cont'd from previous page)



Difficulty in wiggling your toes is a symptom of hammer toes

Mild Symptoms

- Toe that is bent downward
- Calluses or corns

Severe Symptoms

- Claw-like toes
- Difficulty in walking
- Inability to wiggle toes or flex foot

Prevention

A hammertoe can be prevented by wearing properly fitting shoes. It is recommended that you have

the length and width of your foot measured if your shoes fit too snug.

Wearing shoes with a heel over 2 inches can increase pressure on your toes, causing them to bend.

They can also cause the formation of a high arch or corns. It is thus recommended to wear shoes with a heel that is a block heel or less.

Tips to Relieve Pain and Discomfort

Whether you are just noticing the first symptoms of a hammertoe or are awaiting a visit with your podiatrist, the following measures can be taken to achieve relief:

- Wear shoes with a wide toe box. Keep in mind there should be at least one-half inch of space between the tip of your shoe and your longest toe.
- Avoid heels that are over 2 inches
- Be sure your footwear is appropriate for your activity
- Purchase commercial, non-medicated hammertoe pads to help relieve painful pressure. Some have the option for a gel lining that can prevent toe irritation caused by the shoe
- Relieve pain by gently massaging the toe.



The right footwear makes a big difference

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Hammer toes (Cont'd from previous page)

- Apply ice packs as needed to reduce painful swelling.

Treatment Options

The treatment for hammertoe is dependent upon the severity of your symptoms. Several options are available for safe and effective treatment and include:

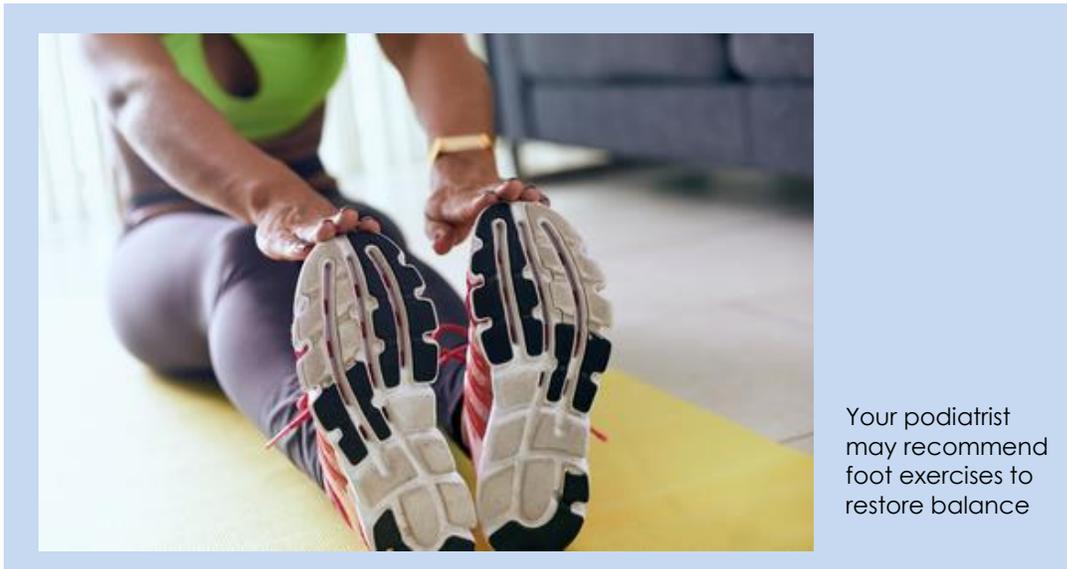
- Use of properly fitting shoes to off-load prominent areas surrounding the bony point of the toe to aid in pain relief.

- Certain medications may be prescribed to decrease inflammation, pain and swelling.

At times, cortisone injections may be used to provide relief of acute pain.

- Custom foot orthotics can be inserted into your shoes; these are prescribed by your podiatrist.

The inserts may prevent worsening of a hammertoe and decrease pain.



Your podiatrist may recommend foot exercises to restore balance

- Your foot specialist may recommend specific foot exercises to help restore muscle balance. In very early stages, splinting of the affected toe may be helpful.
- If suggested treatment options have been unsuccessful a surgical intervention may be required. There are several surgical techniques that can be used to treat hammer toes and they are typically performed in an out-patient setting.

Remember, in any case if you have a question related to foot care, your podiatrist is just a call away!

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*The Care,
Professionalism and
Time that your feet*



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Franc Pirc – Moving on to pastures new!

It is with great sadness but also much nervous excitement that I leave my patients and colleagues at The Footcare Centre as I begin a new chapter in my life. We, as a family, have decided to emigrate to Australia to be nearer our respective families once again. We will be based near Sydney and I will be taking up a position in a private podiatry practice in the Castle Hills district to start with.



I have spent a very enjoyable and informative 3.5 years at The Footcare Centre and my time here will be sorely missed. I have formed so many good relationships with both patients and colleagues that saying 'Good Bye' will be very difficult. I have found my patients here to be incredibly interesting and have heard many a good story which has made the work a constant pleasure. I have relished treating everyone I have at the clinic and hope I have made some positive differences to their general health and overall comfort and wellbeing.

My colleagues have always been fantastic to work with! They are all helpful, friendly and easy to be around. I have found the unwavering professionalism at The Footcare Centre has helped me develop exponentially as a podiatrist and for this I am most grateful. I feel I am leaving the practice a better and more rounded clinician.

I thank everyone who has contributed to making my time at The Footcare Centre a pleasurable and rewarding experience and wish you all the best for the future.

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