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Morton's Neuroma

What is Morton's Neuroma?

Morton's Neuroma is the most common neuroma in the foot. It occurs in the forefoot area (the ball of the foot) at the base of the third and fourth toes. It is sometimes referred to as an intermetatarsal neuroma.

"Intermetatarsal" describes its location - in the ball of the foot between the metatarsal bones (the bones extending from the toes to the midfoot).

A Neuroma is a thickening, or enlargement, of the nerve as a result of compression or irritation of the nerve. Compression and irritation creates swelling of the nerve, which can eventually leading to permanent nerve damage.



Symptoms of a Morton's Neuroma

If you have a Morton's neuroma, you will probably have one or more of these symptoms;

- Tingling, burning, or numbness
- A feeling that something is inside the ball of the foot, or your sock is bunched up
- Pain that is relived by removing your shoes

A Morton's Neuroma often develops gradually. At first they occur only occasionally, when wearing narrower shoes or performing certain activities. The symptoms may go away temporarily by massaging the foot or by avoiding aggravating shoes or activities. Over time the symptoms progressively worsen and may persist for several days or weeks. The symptoms become more intense as the Neuroma enlarges and the temporary changes in the nerve become permanent.



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What Causes a Neuroma?

Anything that causes compression or irritation of the nerve can lead to the development of a Neuroma. One of the most common offenders is wearing shoes that have a tapered toe box, or high-heeled shoes that cause the toes to be forced into the toe box and overload pressure onto the forefoot. An injury or trauma to the forefoot may also lead to a Neuroma



People at a higher risk of developing a Neuroma include;

- People with certain foot deformities, such as bunions or hammertoes
- Certain foot types, such as flatfeet (Pronation)
- More flexible feet, and woman after pregnancy

Treatment of Neuromas

Your Foot Mechanics Podiatrist will offer you a treatment plan based initially on the severity of the Neuroma. Treatment plans often include;

- Padding techniques to provide support for the metatarsal arch, thereby lessening the pressure on the nerve
- Icing. Placing an icepack on the affected area helps reduce swelling
- Custom foot orthotics prescribed by a Foot Mechanics Podiatrist will provide the support needed to reduce pressure and compression on the nerve and facilitate normal foot function
- Activities that put repetitive pressure on the neuroma should be avoided until the condition improves
- Changes in footwear will be recommended if necessary
- Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as ibuprofen, help reduce the pain and inflammation.
- If there is no significant improvement after initial treatment, injection therapy may be indicated.