

A Pebble in Your Shoe? It Could Be a Neuroma



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A Neuroma in the Foot: A Common Condition

- Nerve irritation produces pain
- Pain in ball of the foot
 - Could be a neuroma – very common in the foot
 - Could be a different problem
- Accurate diagnosis is important



What is a Neuroma?

- An impingement (compression) on a nerve
 - Irritates the nerve
 - Causes it to thicken and get bigger
- As a neuroma enlarges
 - Impinges more on surrounding bones & tissues
 - Could get progressively worse unless treated
 - Could eventually lead to permanent nerve damage



Causes of a Neuroma in the Foot

- Certain shoes that irritate the nerve
 - Tapered toe box
 - High heels
- Certain foot structures
 - High arches
- Certain activities involving
 - Repetitive irritation
 - High impact



Where Do Foot Neuromas Develop?

- Most foot neuromas
 - Between the metatarsals (categorized as intermetatarsal neuroma)
- Most common intermetatarsal neuroma
 - Between third and fourth toe
 - Called a Morton's neuroma



Signs and Symptoms of a Neuroma

- Pain
- Tingling, burning or numbness
- Can occur at rest, but worst when walking
- A feeling of:
 - Something bunched up in sock or shoe
 - Walking on a marble or pebble



How Neuromas Affect Patients

- Some people can tolerate symptoms for a while
- Other people find the symptoms debilitating
- Regardless of the patient's tolerance for pain, early diagnosis and treatment is best



The Progression of a Neuroma

- At first, symptoms occur occasionally
- Symptoms may go away temporarily
- Over time, symptoms typically get worse and persist
- Eventually, symptoms intensify
- Nerve damage could become permanent



Preventing Permanent Nerve Damage

- Early intervention is needed
- See a foot and ankle surgeon for
 - A thorough evaluation
 - An effective treatment plan



Diagnosis of Neuromas

- Neuromas can be mistaken for other conditions
- Diagnosis requires:
 - A history of your symptoms
 - Examination of your foot
 - Sometimes imaging tests



Arriving at a Treatment Plan

- Treatment will depend on
 - How long you've had the neuroma
 - Its stage of development
- Nonsurgical approaches are usually first-line treatment
- Surgery if nonsurgical treatment fails



Nonsurgical Treatment Options

- Metatarsal pads
- Icing
- Custom orthotic devices
- Activity modifications
- Shoe modifications
- Ibuprofen or other NSAIDs
- Injections



Surgical Treatment

- For cases unresponsive to nonsurgical treatment
 - Typically advanced neuromas
 - Permanent nerve damage
- Eliminates the pain, but not the numbness



Feeling Discomfort on the Ball of Your Foot?

- Get a Diagnosis and Treatment Today!

(Place DPM's contact info here)



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