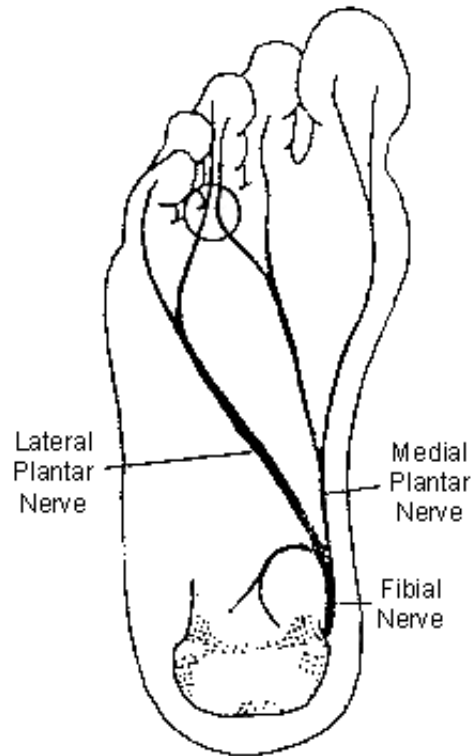


Neuroma

Introduction A neuroma is an inflammatory condition of a nerve in the foot. It was first described by Dr. Thomas Morton at Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia. Even though a neuroma can occur at any site in the ball of your foot, the most common place is between the third and fourth toes. Almost 90% of the cases occur in women.

Anatomy



Causes Narrow shoes as well as high heels can cause the nerve in the foot to be in a position for injury. The tightness can cause the nerve to be pinched, therefore causing it to swell.

Symptoms The most common complaint is a sharp pain in the ball of the foot with tingling and numbness traveling to the toes. The symptoms usually increase with wearing shoes and are usually less painful with bare feet. When the foot is squeezed, a clicking sound may be heard called a Mulder's Sign. This is caused by an inflammatory sack that develops around the nerve. This sign is frequently, but not always present with neuromas.

Treatment Early recognition and medical care are key in the treatment of a neuroma. Conservative treatment consists of accommodative footwear (a wide toe-box) which will not squeeze the ball of the foot. This will provide more space for the nerve that travels in-

between the bones. It is important to stay away from high heels shoes and wear ones that are flat. A metatarsal pad can be added to the shoe to relieve pressure to the area.

An anesthetic with cortisone can be injected into the area to help diagnose your condition as well as to help reduce some of the inflammation to the nerve. This along with proper shoes may help reduce symptoms in 80% of patients.

Surgery is reserved for the patient with persistent pain despite conservative treatment. This can be performed on an outpatient basis through a small incision over the neuroma site. The neuroma is identified and removed. Patients are then placed in a post-operative shoe that they can walk in for a few weeks.

Most Patients can avoid surgery if they are diagnosed early and avoid wearing shoes that can potentially damage the nerves in your feet.