



Know the facts on

# Hammer Toe

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## What is Hammer Toe?

A hammer toe is an abnormal contraction or “buckling” of a toe that occurs due to partial or complete dislocation of one of the toe’s joints.

As a result the toe will press up against the shoe and may cause corns. If the deformity occurs in the lesser toes and in the joint nearest the foot, it is called a hammer toe.



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# What causes Hammer Toe?

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Hammer Toe can be caused by improper shoes, for example if they are too tight at the front or are pointed the joints can be pushed inwards which over time can cause the joints to become dislocated.

Flat feet or high arched feet can also result in buckling toes, a major cause of hammer toe. If you are genetically predisposed to having high arches or flat feet the chances of hammer toe may also be higher.

# What will happen if untreated?

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If left untreated the toe muscles will eventually be unable to straighten. Corns and calluses can develop on the tips of the toes or on the top of the toe's middle joint. Pain can also develop in the other toes and the feet as a whole.



# What can help?

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Changing your choice of shoe can help as a first course of action if this has been a contributing factor..

A shoe with a deep toe box is recommended while shoes with high heels or narrow toe boxes would not be due to the pressure that they place on the toes.

Exercises may be prescribed to stretch and strengthen the toes.

# What are the treatment options?

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In many cases seeking early treatment can prevent the future requirement of surgery.

Typical treatment options would include custom-made orthotics, helping to improve foot function, and medications such as ibuprofen to reduce the pain and inflammation.

Surgery would be considered as a last resort if conservative treatments had not provided any symptom relief.