

**If you discover any problems with your feet, contact your Podiatry Department or GP immediately. If they are not available, go to your nearest accident and emergency department. Remember, any delay in getting advice or treatment when you have a problem can lead to more serious problems.**

*Individual advice*

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**Equality Statement**

At South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust we are fully committed to equality and diversity, both as an employer and as a service provider. We have a policy statement in our Equality Strategy that clearly outlines our commitment to equality for service users, patients and staff:

You and your family have the right to be treated fairly and be routinely involved in decisions about your treatment and care. You can expect to be treated with dignity and respect. You will not be discriminated against on any grounds including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

You have a responsibility to treat other service users, patients and our staff with dignity and respect

Our information for patients can also be made available in other languages, Braille, audio tape, disc or in large print.

**PALS**

We offer a Patient Advice Liaison Service (PALS). This is a confidential service for families to help with any questions or concerns about local health services.

You can contact the service by the direct telephone line on 01926 600 054 by email: [Pals@swft.nhs.uk](mailto:Pals@swft.nhs.uk) or by calling in person to the PALS Office which is located in the Lakin Road Entrance of Warwick Hospital.

South Warwickshire 

NHS Foundation Trust

## Podiatry Department



**What to expect from the Podiatry Hospital Rheumatology Clinic**  
**Rheumatology conditions information and advice leaflet**

Name:

NHS No:

**Podiatry Single Point of Access**  
**Telephone: 01926 600810**

Lines open 9am to 4pm Monday to Friday

E- mail: [podiatryreferrals@swft.nhs.uk](mailto:podiatryreferrals@swft.nhs.uk)

## **Why you may need to see a Podiatrist**

Rheumatology conditions can cause painful joints which can lead to changes in the way the foot appears and works. The aim of the podiatrist is to try to minimize these changes and relieve discomfort.

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) has published guidelines on what treatment people with Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) should expect to receive from their NHS foot health department. This includes an annual foot assessment with a podiatrist who should offer specialist advice on their feet including advise on footwear, insole/ orthotic therapy if needed and appropriate reduction of corns and or callus.

## **Rheumatology conditions and the foot**

If you have a Rheumatology condition you may have problems with your feet. It can lead to inflamed joints and tendons which can cause structural damage to your feet which can lead to pain, discomfort and difficulty walking and getting about.

The ankle joint can be affected leading to pain and stiffness. Toes can change shape leading to mallet or clawed toes which can be problematic when trying to get shoes to fit. Pain under the balls of the feet (metatarsal area) can be from soft tissue damage.

Common problems are the occurrence of neuroma (a fibrous thickening of nerve), bursa (a sac of fluid over a joint) or nodules (form under the skin where there is pressure). Any area on the foot which is being traumatised can lead to corns or callus which can be very painful.

Bunions or problems with the big toe (Hallux) can also occur which can be painful and make shoe fitting very difficult.

You may experience poor tissue viability which can develop from poor arterial circulation. Some treatments for your illness may delay wound healing which can lead to non healing sores on the foot, especially where there is high level of trauma.

**If you detect any open wound, redness, discharge or heat on your foot it is important to seek medical advice as soon as possible. Make an urgent appointment to see your GP, nurse or podiatrist.**

The podiatrist will be able to help with the care of your feet. They can assess the disease process in your feet by looking at, feeling and moving the joints in your feet.

They will observe the way your foot moves when you walk and stand. They can monitor any changes taking place in your feet as a result of your diagnosis.

The Podiatrist can offer help and advise in foot care and discuss your footwear. They can offer advice on how best to manage your nail care. If the podiatrist believes that you will benefit from orthotics or insoles then a pair of these will be provided. If you have any corns or callus the podiatrist may treat these for you too.

The podiatrist may feel that you will benefit from other health professionals advice and treatment, such as surgery or the provision of surgical footwear and they will be able to refer you for further help and assistance.