

- 3) There are specialist devices that loop around the big toe to provide stretching. Spread your feet so that the toe is 'straightened' – hold for several minutes. Repeat several times.
- 4) Pull toes in (not clawing) and lift arch up. Hold for 5 seconds and relax. Repeat 20 times. (*Vasyli international ltd*)

Products

Big toe night splints (not recommended for diabetics)
www.simplyfeet.co.uk

Insoles: Anti pronatory devices can alleviate symptoms and are available from larger chemists

Bunion covers
 From most good chemists or
www.firstaidforfeet.com



These are specialist devices that loop around the big toe to provide stretching.

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 or by calling in person to the PALS Office which is located in the Lakin Road Entrance of Warwick Hospital.

SWFT Podiatry Department does not supply sport orthotics, purely for use in sports.

South Warwickshire **NHS**
 NHS Foundation Trust

Podiatry Department

**Bunions
 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

Bunions (Hallux Valgus)

Even though bunions are a common foot deformity, there are misconceptions about them. Many people may unnecessarily suffer the pain of bunions for years before seeking treatment.

What is a bunion?

Bunions (hallux valgus) are often described as a bump on the side of the big toe. But a bunion is more than that. The visible bump actually reflects changes in the bony framework of the front part of the foot. With a bunion, the big toe leans toward the second toe, rather than pointing straight ahead. This throws the bones out of alignment, producing the bunion's "bump".



Bunions are a progressive disorder. They begin with a leaning of the big toes, gradually changing the angle of the bones over the years and slowly producing the characteristic bump, which continues to become increasingly prominent. Usually the symptoms of bunions appear at later stages, although some people never have symptoms.

What causes a bunion?

Bunions are most often caused by an inherited faulty mechanical structure of the foot. It is not the bunion itself that is inherited, but certain foot types that make a person prone to developing a bunion. Although wearing shoes that crowd the toes won't actually cause bunions in the first place, it sometimes makes the deformity

progressively worse. That means you may experience symptoms sooner.

Symptoms

Symptoms occur most often when wearing shoes that crowd the toes – shoes with a tight toe box or high heels. This may explain why women are more likely to have symptoms than men. In addition, spending long periods of time on your feet can aggravate the symptoms of bunions. Symptoms which occur at the site of the bunion may include:

- Pain or soreness
- Inflammation and redness
- A burning sensation
- Perhaps some numbness

Other conditions which may appear with bunions include calluses on the big toes, sores between the toes, ingrown toenail and restricted motion of the toe (hallux limitus / rigidus)

Treatment

Early treatments are aimed at easing the pain of bunions but they won't reverse the deformity itself.

What can I do?

Changes in shoe wear: wearing the right kind of shoes is very important. Choose shoes with appropriate fastenings and that have a wide toe box and forgo those with pointed toes or high heels which may aggravate the condition.

Padding: pads placed over the area of the bunion can help minimize pain by deflecting rubbing and friction from the joint. You can purchase bunion pads at any chemist or other leading outlets specialising in foot products.

Big toe night splints help stretch tight tendons and muscles around the joint while you sleep. There is poor evidence for its effectiveness. Not recommended for those with diabetes.

Activity modifications: avoid activity that causes bunion pain, including standing for long periods of time.

Icing: applying an ice pack several times a day helps reduce inflammation and pain.

Orthoses: Orthotic devices have helped in certain cases and can be purchased at larger pharmacies, retailers and online. These will not cure a bunion but can relieve pressure on the joint.

Exercises for bunions

There is no evidence to suggest that exercises can prevent further deformity; however some patients have found the following helpful.

• Keeping the joint mobile is important as this goes a long way to helping and preventing the arthritic type pain that can develop inside the joint of bunions.

• The following 4 exercises are a random selection from patient self-help websites which individuals have found beneficial. However, there is no written evidence to prove any are effective.

1) Grasp the big toe with one hand and do some yoga like stretches on the joint in all directions. Hold the position at the end range of motion for 10 to 15 seconds. Repeat several times in all directions.

2) Grasp the toe and the foot and try and 'pull' the toe 'off'. Hold for 10 to 15 seconds. Repeat several times (If you are elderly or have arthritic problems, please seek advice before trying this exercise).