

BUNION

(Hallux Valgus)



BASIC INFORMATION

DESCRIPTION

A bony protrusion from the outside edge of the joint at the base of the big (first) toe. Three times as many women as men have the disorder.

FREQUENT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- An inward-turned first toe that may overlap the second and sometimes the third toe.
- Thickened skin over the bony protrusion at the base of the first toe (callus).
- Fluid accumulation under the thickened skin (sometimes).
- Foot pain and stiffness.

CAUSES

Hallux valgus. The technical name for the big toe is hallux. If the big toe has grown or been forced into a position where it overlaps one or more of the other toes, that is called hallux valgus.

RISK INCREASES WITH

- Family history of foot abnormalities (inherited weakness in toe joints).
- Arthritis.
- Narrow-toed, high-heeled shoes that compress toes together.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

- Exercise daily to keep muscles of the feet and legs in good condition.
- Wear wide-toed shoes that fit well. Don't wear high heels or shoes without room for toes in their normal position.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Usually curable with treatment and preventive measures to guard against recurrence.

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

- Infection of the bunion, especially in persons with diabetes mellitus.
- Inflammation and arthritic changes in other joints caused by walking difficulty, which places abnormal stress on the foot, hip and spine.



TREATMENT

GENERAL MEASURES

- Before bedtime, separate the first toe from the others with a foam-rubber pad.
- Wear a thick, ring-shaped adhesive pad around and over the bunion.
- Use arch supports to relieve pressure on the bunion. These are available in shoe-repair shops.
- Surgery to remove the overgrown tissue (bunion) and to correct the position of the bones.

MEDICATIONS

Medicine usually is not necessary for this disorder unless infection develops.

ACTIVITY

If surgery is necessary, resume your normal activities gradually afterward. Walk on your heels until the surgical site heals. Elevate the foot of the bed to reduce swelling.

DIET

No special diet.



NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

- You or a family member has a bunion that is interfering with normal activities.
- Signs of infection, such as fever, heat, tenderness or pain, develop after treatment or surgery.