

Treatment of hard skin

A toe deformity can sometimes result in the formation of painful calluses or corns. Treatment of calluses or corns is not provided by the NHS but can be effectively managed by a private chiropodist or podiatrist. Information regarding where to obtain these services is contained within the leaflet: 'Accessing Podiatry Providers Other Than Through The NHS'.

Surgery

A surgical opinion for symptomatic toe deformities may be considered if all other non-surgical options have been exhausted and found to be ineffective. Surgery is not offered to improve the appearance of your foot. Complications of surgery can involve post operative pain, post operative infection, non-healing, scarring and recurrence. If required however, a surgical opinion should be sought through your general practitioner.

If you have any questions about the information in this leaflet, please contact Podiatry Services. Further information about the service and how to manage a range of foot health problems yourself, can also be found on our website:

www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk/project/podiatry

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Podiatry Services Patient Information Leaflet



Toe Deformities

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What is a toe deformity?

The term toe deformity is used to describe a positional change in the little bones of the toe. This can occur at any age and may appear for a variety of reasons. There are a number of different types of deformity and they can be mobile (can be straightened out) or fixed (cannot be straightened). Some examples are shown below:



What are the symptoms?

- Painful and inflamed skin - from excess friction on footwear.
- Painful corns and callus - from excess friction or pressure.
- Deformed, thickened or black toe nails.
- Sore areas between toes - from rubbing against the adjacent toe.
- Ulceration - breaks in the skin

Treatment

Self help and home treatments are usually the best way to manage these symptoms. If you have an ulceration however you should seek advice from a healthcare professional.

Footwear

The majority of issues caused by toe deformities can be resolved with the appropriate footwear. This may mean that you need to wear a style of shoe that you wouldn't ordinarily choose.

The attributes of an appropriate shoe include the following:

- A wide/deep toe box - the front part of the shoe where the toes sit
- Stretchy material in the toe box
- An effective fastening - to reduce movement within the shoe
- A low heel pitch
- A shoe that is the correct size.



Toe protectors and separators

These can be useful to reduce friction on the top, the end and between the toes. Usually devices made from 'Silipos Gel' work well and can be obtained from your local pharmacy or online. Examples are shown below:

For pain/rubbing on top of the toes or between the toes, consider a gel toe tube, also known as a gel toe sleeve.

Online search: silipos gel toe tube.



For any pain/hard skin at the end of the toes, consider a gel toe crest, also known as a toe prop. They can also support the toe joints if they are the part of the toe causing pain.

Online search: silipos gel toe crest



For pain/rubbing between the toes, consider a gel toe separator. These come in different thicknesses and it may be better to start with a thinner device.

Online search: silipos gel toe separator

