

# MORTON'S NEUROMA

## WHAT IS MORTON'S NEUROMA?

Morton's Neuroma is the term used for when a nerve in the forefoot becomes irritated, compressed and enlarged. The compression often occurs along the nerve that travels between two adjacent metatarsal bones (the long bones in the forefoot that connect to your toes).

Squeezing and friction can cause the nerve and surrounding tissue to thicken and become painful or hypersensitive. Most commonly it can be felt between the third and fourth toes although the second and third toes can also be affected. In rare cases it may affect both feet at the same time.

## HOW COMMON IS IT?

This is a very common condition, generally affecting more women than men. High-heeled shoes increase your chances of experiencing a Morton's Neuroma. Runners may also be at risk of developing the condition.

## WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Most commonly the main symptom is pain on the ball of the foot and at the base of the toes. The pain is often a sharp or burning type pain.

If your foot is squeezed, for example into footwear, the pain may be exacerbated. The pain can be continuous and strange sensations, such as tingling, may also be experienced. The discomfort may be enough to cause you to limp.

## WHAT TESTS MAY BE DONE?

Your podiatrist may ask you some questions to build a history of your problem to help them arrive at a diagnosis. You will probably have a biomechanical assessment to see whether your lower limb or foot biomechanics are contributing towards the problem. Your podiatrist may request a referral for your foot to be medically scanned to help gain a detailed image of the inside of your foot.

## WHAT ARE YOUR TREATMENT OPTIONS?

### **Non-operative treatment**

Your GP may firstly prescribe painkillers. Icing the area is a very good way of reducing pain, as is anti-inflammatory medications, and your podiatrist will give you advice on both of these options.

Your podiatrist will assess your footwear and may suggest you change them if they feel they are a contributory factor. You may have an insole prescribed aimed at reducing the compression at the nerve.

If there is no improvement it may be necessary for your podiatrist to arrange a referral for steroid injections under ultrasound guidance.

### **Surgical treatment**

Surgical treatment is only indicated when conservative options have not succeeded in managing your pain levels. This type of surgery is a common procedure that involves removing the neuroma or possibly the nerve itself.

*This leaflet has been written to help you understand more about the problem with your foot. This leaflet is not a substitute for professional medical advice and should be used in conjunction with verbal information and treatment given.*