



## HEALTH INFORMATION

# Bunions

## What are bunions?

**A bunion is a bony deformity of the joint at the base of the big toe. Sometimes the big toe can become angled towards the middle of the foot and second toe. If the bones become misaligned a painful bunion can form.**

Anyone can develop a bunion but they are usually more common in women than men.  
The medical name for a bunion is hallux valgus.

## What causes a Bunion?

It is not known exactly what causes a bunion but wearing badly fitted shoes is thought to make the condition worse. Research also suggest that bunions may run in families.

It is thought that bunions are more likely to occur in people who have unusually flexible joints. In some cases certain health conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis and gout may be responsible for the formation of bunions. These conditions cause pain and inflammation in the joints.

## Symptoms of a Bunion

A swollen bony bump on the outside of your foot:

- Pain, tenderness and swelling over the big toe joints which can be made worse by pressure of ill-fitting shoes
- Sore skin over the top of the bunion
- Hard callus, red skin which can be caused by the big toe and second toes overlapping
- Changes to the shape of the foot may also occur

## Diagnosing bunions

Bunions usually get worse over time so if you develop one see your GP, it is important to get medical help, if you have a bunion that is causing you pain and discomfort.

Your GP will examine your foot and ask you about any symptoms you have such as pain, swelling and redness. Your GP will also ask you about general medical history. Your GP may arrange for you to have an X-ray to assess the extent of the deformity.

## What is the treatment?

Bunions may only need to be treated if they cause significant pain and discomfort but if the deformity is severe, non-surgical treatment may include pain killers, bunion pads and modifying footwear. Surgery can be an option but would need to be discussed with your GP.

## What can you do to help yourself?

The risk can be greatly reduced by wearing shoes that fit properly. You may wish to consider a visit to a podiatrist who will examine your feet and give you advice about suitable foot wear.

## Where can you go for further information?

[www.NHS.uk](http://www.NHS.uk)

[www.medigold-health.com](http://www.medigold-health.com)

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