Conditions InDepth: Foot Pain

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En Español (Spanish Version)

The foot is a complex structure of 26 bones, 33 joints, and 126 muscles, ligaments, and nerves. Only a small percentage of Americans are born with foot problems. Most problems are due to neglect and improper care, including ill-fitting shoes. With age, changes occur in the feet. Some disorders begin early in life and are affected by heredity, gait patterns, and terrain. About 75% of Americans will experience foot pain at some point in their lives.

Normal Anatomy of the Left Foot

![Foot Anatomy Image]

Common causes of foot pain include:

- Poor-fitting shoes
- High-heeled shoes
- Poor posture
- High impact exercise (e.g., running)
- Poor balance

Foot pain may also be caused by systemic disease. For example:

- **Arthritis** (osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis)—Arthritis can cause stiffness and reduced range of motion.
- **Peripheral Vascular Disease**—This condition affects the legs and feet by causing reduced circulation, swelling, and increased risk of infection.
- **Diabetes**—A common complication of diabetes is reduced circulation, which causes a number of problems in the legs and feet including abnormal sensation, swelling, and increased risk of infection.
- **Gout**—Gout may cause pain and swelling in the great toe.

For descriptions of many common types of foot pain, [click here](#).
What are the risk factors for foot pain?
What are the symptoms of foot pain?
How is foot pain diagnosed?
What are the treatments for foot pain?
Are there screening tests for foot pain?
How can I reduce my risk of foot pain?
What questions should I ask my doctor?
What is it like to live with a bunion?
Where can I get more information about foot pain?

REFERENCES:


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