



# MORTON'S NEUROMA

A neuroma is a benign tumor of a nerve. Morton's neuroma is a thickening of the tissue that surrounds the digital nerve leading to the toes. It occurs as the nerve passes under the ligament connecting the toe bones (metatarsals) in the forefoot.



## What are symptoms of a Morton's neuroma?

If you sometimes feel that you are "walking on a marble" and you have persistent pain in the ball of your foot, you may have a Morton's neuroma. Normally, there are no outward signs. Burning pain in the ball of the foot that may radiate into the toes. The pain generally intensifies with activity or wearing shoes. Night pain is rare. There may also be numbness or an unpleasant feeling in the toes.

Runners may feel pain as they push off from the starting block. High-heeled shoes or tight, narrow shoes can also aggravate the condition by compressing the toe bones and pinching the nerve.



## What is Morton's Neuroma?

Morton's neuroma frequently develops between the third and fourth toes, usually in response to irritation, trauma, or excessive pressure. The incidence of Morton's neuroma is eight to ten times greater in women than in men.

## What is the treatment?

Initial therapies are nonsurgical and relatively simple. They can involve one or more of the following treatments:

**Changes in footwear.** Avoid high heels or tight shoes and wear wider shoes with lower heels and a soft sole. This enables the bones to spread out and may reduce pressure on the nerve, giving it time to heal.

**Orthoses.** Custom shoe inserts and pads also help relieve irritation by lifting and separating the bones, reducing the pressure on the nerve.

**Injection.** One or more injections of a corticosteroid medication can reduce the swelling and inflammation of the nerve, resulting in some relief.

Several studies have shown that a combination of roomier and more comfortable shoes, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medication, custom foot orthoses and cortisone injections provide relief in over 80 percent of people with Morton's neuroma. If conservative treatment does not relieve your symptoms, surgical treatment options can be explored.

Surgery consists of excision of the neuroma which is causing the pain. A lessening of the sensitivity, which is usually temporary, can be observed in toes adjacent to the Morton's neuroma can occur. Morton's syndrome can be associated with other conditions in about **25% of cases**. A pathology specimen will be taken during the procedure to confirm the presence of a benign neuroma.

#### Morton's Neuroma

Inflammation (swelling) severe pain and numbness



## What happens after surgery?

Post surgery you can weight bear immediately, as tolerated using a specialized shoe.

This will minimize the weight exerted on the forefoot and redirect it to the heel. You can expect some pain and swelling following surgery.

The foot should be kept elevated as much as possible for the first three days and you may need to take oral pain medication.

## Contact Us



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