



FOOT SENSE

A monthly newsletter from your podiatrist



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Why Is My Big Toe Killing Me?

Many people come into the office complaining about big toe pain. For some, the reason is obvious: a misadventure in the dark such as colliding with furniture, or extended sessions of pickleball or tennis in ill-fitting shoes.



However, not all big toe pain has a clear and immediate cause. Let's look at the 7 main reasons this problem may be bringing you to my office and what to do about them.

Stubbed Toe

Yes, this is one of the most common reasons you'll see me with big toe pain. While common many people tend to disregard it and think it's nothing. The pain will just go away on it's own. Not so fast! A stubbed toe, could be fractured. It's best to come in and get it checked out before going on that 3 mile walk you planned.

Ingrown Toenail

An ingrown toenail is another extremely common cause of big toe pain. Family history, trauma, short shoes, and improperly cut toenails can all lead to an ingrown big toenail.

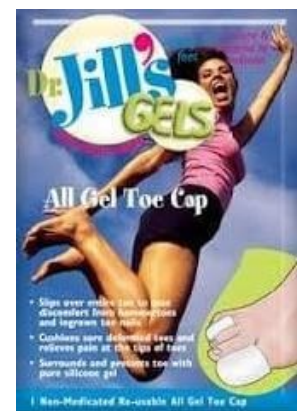
Fortunately surgery can be done right in the podiatry office. Most patients feel little pain and can start their usual activities the next day. Our office sees a lot of kids with ingrown toenails. To help prevent it, make sure your kids aren't outgrowing their shoes. And don't forget even adults feet can increase in shoe size— arches can flatten with age or weight gain. Everyone needs to make sure to cut their toenails straight across.

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Available At Our Office

Toe Cap
\$12



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Dr. Berg performing ingrown toenail surgery on his boat.



Thanks to all of our patients for donating shoes for the North Seattle Family Resource Center shoe drive.

Pumpkin Hummus

Are you planning a Halloween party or perhaps you've been asked to bring something to someone else's? Don't fret. Here's a fairly simple dish that will look very Halloween-like too!

- 1 small pumpkin (about 500g)
- olive oil, for roasting
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled
- ½ lemon, juiced
- 2 tbsp tahini paste
- 400g can chickpeas, drained
- 1 red pepper, deseeded, and sliced
- 1 yellow pepper, deseeded, and sliced
- mini breadsticks and pitta chips, to serve

Directions:

1. Cut the top off the pumpkin, about two-thirds of the way up. Remove the pumpkin seeds, then scoop the



Source:BBC Good Food

flesh out of the bottom and the lid.

2. Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Cut the pumpkin flesh into pieces and put in a roasting tin with the garlic and a good glug of oil. Season, then bake for 45 mins until very tender. Leave to cool.

3. Put the pumpkin into a food processor with any juices from the roasting tin and the garlic. Add the lemon juice, tahini paste and chickpeas. Season with salt and blend to a paste – add a little more oil if it's too thick. Scoop the hummus back into the pumpkin and serve with the peppers, breadsticks and pitta chips.

Turf Toe

Turf toe most often occurs in athletes. It's very common in football kickers but can occur in any game where players jam their toe or repeatedly push off during running and jumping.

The term was originally coined with sports played on artificial turf; the harder artificial surface makes cleats more likely to stick. However, turf toe can also occur on grass surfaces, particularly when the shoe worn is not supportive.

Tennis Toe or Runner's Toe

Tennis has its own specific toe injury caused by the fast changes in direction and the toe pushing against the toe box. Damage can result in the area underneath the toenail. It often gets worse with time.



Another name for tennis toe is runner's toe.

Runners can also easily damage their big toenails if their shoes are too short or if their foot slides forward in their shoe.

Preventing these injuries is very straightforward. If you play tennis or run, keep your toenails short and wear shoes that fit. In addition, as a runner, you can take advantage of the extra eyelet on the top of your shoe if your feet tend to slide forward. You can use a heel lock to more tightly secure your feet in your shoes.

Sesamoiditis

This is an overuse injury involving chronic inflammation of the sesamoid bones and the tendons involved with those bones.

The sesamoids are two pea-shaped bones located in the ball of the foot, beneath the big toe joint.

Sesamoiditis is caused by increased pressure to the sesamoids frequently seen in ballet dancers, runners, and baseball catchers. People with high arches who wear high heels are also at risk.

Hallux Rigidus

Hallux stands for big toe. You might guess from the names that limitus means "limited movement" and rigidus means "a rigid, inflexible toe". Both of these conditions can be quite painful since we use our big toes for all of our mobile activities.



Usually a person with this condition starts out with hallux limitus which can progress to hallux rigidus. Both are forms of degenerative arthritis and can be inherited but can also develop from trauma to the big toe. Early treatment is important to prevent it from getting to the rigid stage. Wearing orthotics, anti-inflammatory treatments, and rocker bottom shoes are all effective treatments.

Gout

Gout is caused by a buildup of uric acid (a normal byproduct of the diet) in the joints. The big toe joint is most commonly affected, very likely from the pressure during walking and because uric acid crystals build up in the coolest part of the body.



Attacks of gout are extremely painful and can be triggered by diets high in purines such as those found in red meat, organ meats like liver and kidney, shellfish, red wine and beer. Avoiding these foods and certain medications and drinking plenty of water are the best ways to avoid this condition.

Halloween Health Tips

As Halloween approaches, it's essential to keep your health and the health of your little ones in mind amidst the festivities. Here are some simple tips to ensure a healthy and enjoyable Halloween.

Mindful Treats: While it's tempting to indulge in Halloween candies, remember to enjoy them in moderation, particularly if you're diabetic. Pair sweet treats with nutritious snacks to maintain a balanced diet.

Stay Hydrated: Don't forget to drink plenty of water. Staying hydrated helps keep your energy up and ensures you stay alert during spooky activities.

Pumpkin Goodness: Incorporate pumpkins into your diet; they're not just for carving. They're rich in vitamins and minerals that can boost your health.

Wear Support Shoes: While your little goblins might want to wear flip flops or big crazy shoes, their feet may get scraped up or they could fall. Opt for tennis shoes instead.

This Halloween, let's keep it spooky yet healthy by following these simple guidelines. Enjoy the season while taking care of yourself!"



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—Dr. Rion Berg

