



FOOT SENSE

A monthly newsletter from your podiatrist



Dr. Rion Berg

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What's Causing My Ball of Foot Pain?

Many of my patients wonder why they've developed pain in the ball of their feet. While physical activity can be a major culprit in ball of foot pain, there are many other reasons for developing pain in that part of your foot.



Symptoms

First let's look at the symptoms. They can range from sharp or shooting pain when the toes are flexed to tingling or numbness in the toes. It can even feel like you're walking on a pebble. The pain can occur in one spot or all across the ball of the foot.

- Metatarsalgia
- Morton's neuroma
- Hallux rigidus/Hallux limitus
- Sesamoiditis
- Capsulitis
- Turf toe
- Plantar Plate Tear

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Other Reasons You Have Ball of Foot Pain

While many different conditions create ball of foot pain, many of their causes are similar. And most have more than one cause.

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Dr.'s Remedy Fearless Foot Finisher
Therapeutic Foot Balm
Cost—\$54





Shakshuka

Shakshuka is all the rage in Israel and other parts of the Middle East and North Africa. Try out this tasty egg based breakfast or meal for any other time of day.

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 red bell pepper, seeded and diced
- 4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 2 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 28-ounce can whole peeled tomatoes
- 6 large eggs
- salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 small bunch fresh cilantro, chopped
- 1 small bunch fresh parsley, chopped



1. Heat olive oil in a large sauté pan on medium heat. Add the chopped bell pepper and onion and cook for 5 minutes or until the onion becomes translucent.
2. Add garlic and spices and cook an additional minute.
3. Pour the can of tomatoes and juice into the pan and break down the tomatoes using a large spoon. Season with salt and pepper and bring the sauce to a simmer.
4. Use your large spoon to make small wells in the sauce and crack the eggs into each well. Cover the pan and cook for 5-8 minutes, or until the eggs are done to your liking.
5. Garnish with chopped cilantro and parsley.

Source: [Downshiftology](https://www.downshiftology.com/shakshuka-recipe/)

Improper Shoes

Foot problems they cause: Morton's neuroma, metatarsalgia, sesamoiditis

Wearing shoes that are too tight, narrow, and high can cause and worsen certain types of foot problems. For example, high heels put more pressure on the ball of the foot and force the toes into the toe box. When that toe box is too pointy or narrow it puts additional pressure on the foot which can cause a neuroma to develop. Sesamoiditis can also develop from the increased pressure on the ball of the foot from wearing heeled shoes.



Abnormal Foot Mechanics

Foot problems it causes: Morton's neuroma, hallux rigidus, metatarsalgia, sesamoiditis, capsulitis, plantar plate tear

Nearly all ball of foot problems are also the result of abnormal foot mechanics.

That means instead of having a neutral foot, many people with ball of foot pain have either arches that are too high or too low.

People with high arches tend to put more pressure on the ball of their foot with every step. That can lead to Morton's neuroma and metatarsalgia. People with low arches or flat feet tend to pronate and are at risk for developing Hallux rigidus.

Finally, some people have a 2nd or 3rd toe longer than their big toe. That can shift weight to the other toes and cause Morton's neuroma.



Trauma

Foot problems it causes: Turf toe, metatarsalgia, plantar plate tear

Injuries acquired while playing team sports and even stubbing your toe can cause trauma to the ball of the foot. That trauma can start a process leading to the conditions listed above.

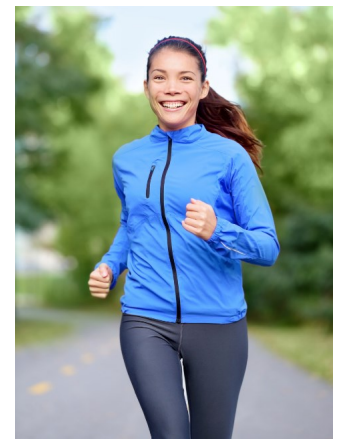
Overuse and High Impact Sports

Foot problems they cause:

Morton's neuroma, hallux rigidus, turf toe, metatarsalgia, sesamoiditis, plantar plate tear

While athletes and weekend warriors can sustain acute trauma while playing a sport, overuse injuries are much more common.

These are injuries that occur after playing a sport for many years or when sports play is ramped up too quickly. For example, someone who runs 30 miles in one week after not running for many years.



Inflammatory Conditions

Foot problems it causes: Bunion, metatarsalgia

Sometimes an underlying inflammatory condition such as gout or rheumatoid arthritis can be a factor in developing a ball of foot condition. This is the case for bunions and metatarsalgia, although, it doesn't have to be present for these conditions to develop.

How to Help the People of Ukraine

The war in the Ukraine enters its second agonizing week, many of us are wondering how we can help. Many organizations are on the ground helping keep people warm and fed.

Like me you want to make sure that your dollars get to the people who need them. Here are some organizations vetted by the Better Business Bureau. All of these organizations are active in Ukrainian Relief Activities.



[Alight](#)

[American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee](#)

[Catholic Relief Services](#)

[International Rescue Committee](#)

[Mercy Corp](#)

[Salvation Army](#)

[Save the Children](#)

[UNHCR—The UN Refugee Agency](#)

Foot and Ankle Center of Lake City
2611 NE 125th St, Suite 130
Seattle, WA 98125