



FOOT SENSE

A monthly newsletter from your podiatrist



Dr. Rion Berg

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Hammertoe Surgery At Our Podiatry Clinic

Does this sound like you? You've known for a while that your toes have been bothering you, but you've been too busy to do anything about it. They used to lay flat and fit well in your shoes, but now they look a bit bent out of shape and they're giving you all kinds of pain.



What's going on here?

Very likely you've developed hammertoes, claw toes, or mallet toes. While they all sound a bit different, they're all variations on a type of bent toe. For the sake of making things easy, we'll just refer to them as hammertoes. This term was coined because toes that are bent can look like a hammer. The top of the toes can bend upward or curve inward. Sometimes toes can also overlap. Other symptoms you may be experiencing are:

- Pain when wearing shoes
- Stiffness and difficulty in moving the affected toe or toes
- Redness and swelling
- Corns, bunions, calluses, or other friction-related injuries

What Causes Hammertoe?

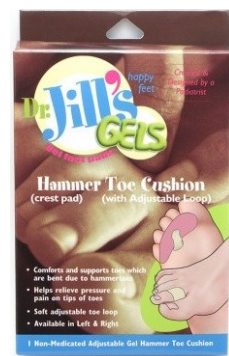
- Faulty foot structure. If you have flat feet or high arches you're more at risk for developing hammertoe.
- Wore the wrong shoes. If you regularly wore high heels or shoes with a small toe box and your toes spent too much time crowded and curled
- Sustained an injury, such as a jam, stub, or fracture.
- Weak muscles. Poorly or abnormally balanced toe muscles may make one or more of your toes contract.

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Hammertoe Cushion \$13





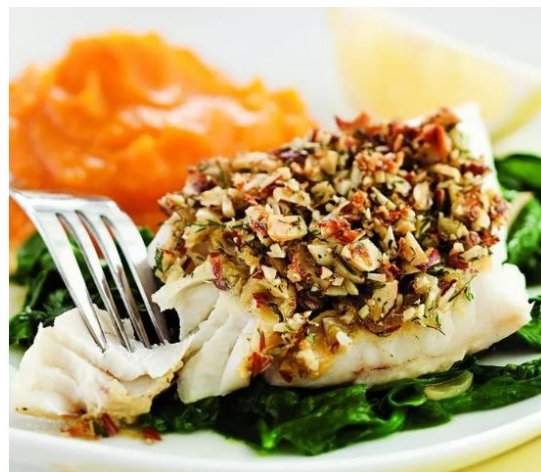
Dr. Berg and daughter Molly at
Kraken Game



Jasmine and Tristan at
Erawan Falls in Thailand

Almond-&-Lemon-Crusted Fish with Spinach

- Zest and juice of 1 lemon, divided
- ½ cup sliced almonds, coarsely chopped
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh dill or 1 teaspoon dried
- 1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt, divided
- Freshly ground pepper to taste
- 1 1/4 pounds cod (see Tip) or halibut, cut into 4 portions
- 4 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 2 cloves garlic, slivered
- 1 pound baby spinach
- Lemon wedges for garnish



Source: [Eating Well](#)

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Coat a rimmed baking sheet with cooking spray.
2. Combine lemon zest, almonds, dill, 1 tablespoon oil, 1/2 teaspoon salt and pepper in a small bowl. Place fish on the prepared baking sheet and spread each portion with 1 teaspoon mustard. Divide the almond mixture among the portions, pressing it onto the mustard.
3. Bake the fish until opaque in the center, about 7 to 9 minutes, depending on thickness.
4. Meanwhile, heat the remaining 2 teaspoons oil in a Dutch oven over medium heat. Add garlic and cook, stirring, until fragrant but not brown, about 30 seconds. Stir in spinach, lemon juice and the remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt; season with pepper. Cook, stirring often, until the spinach is just wilted, 2 to 4 minutes. Cover to keep warm. Serve the fish with the spinach and lemon wedges, if desired.

Who's More Likely to Develop Hammertoe?

- Older adults
- Women, particularly if they wore heels or constricted footwear
- People with certain medical conditions such as arthritis or diabetes

Treating Hammertoe at Home

If your toes are bent or seem to be bending, you'll want to take a break from wearing heels, pointed shoes, or any other footwear that's going to put your toes in an unnatural or



uncomfortable position. You may also want to consider buying new, roomier shoes. In the meantime, and until your hammertoe has healed, you can try:

- Getting a special hammertoe pad from your podiatrist. We recommend [Dr. Jill's Gels Hammer Toe Cushion](#).
- Applying ice packs to the affected toes several times per day
- Taking over-the-counter pain medications to manage any discomfort

Conservative Treatment of Hammertoe at the Office

We have a variety of techniques and tools to help relieve your hammertoe pain.

- Pads and tape to help reposition your toe and relieve pain (see Dr. Jill's Gels Hammer Toe Cushion above)
- Special [orthotic devices](#), including custom-made shoes, that use your body's physical contours and features to set your toes straight and promote healing.

Surgery for Hammertoe At Our Office

Overtime your hammertoe may become more rigid. If this happens you'll likely need surgery to get rid of the discomfort.

Fortunately, we offer surgery for hammertoe right in our day surgery center at the office.

We currently do 3 types of surgery here to relieve your hammertoe pain.

Prevention of Hammertoe

If you have flat feet or high arches, you're more at risk for developing a hammertoe. And because we inherit our foot type you may have already seen hammertoes on your parents feet or perhaps those of a sibling.

For that reason, it's important to follow these steps if you're in that situation.

- Wear shoes with heels of one inch or less
- Wear shoes with a wider toe box that give you plenty of wiggle room
- [Try lacing your athletic shoes to give you more room in your toe box.](#)
- Wear your orthotics all the time if you have them.



To learn more about hammertoe treatment and surgery, give our office a call at 206-368-7000 so we can set up a consultation for you with Dr. Berg.

March is Women's History Month

As we honor Women's History Month, we must recognize the remarkable contributions of women athletes who have shattered barriers and inspired generations with their prowess and determination.

One notable figure is Serena Williams, a tennis legend whose dominance on the court has transcended eras. With 23 Grand Slam singles titles to her name, Williams has not only redefined the game of tennis but has also been a vocal advocate for gender equality and women's empowerment in sports.

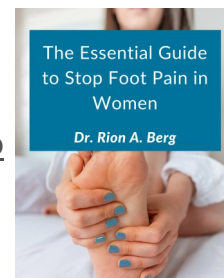


Another trailblazer worth celebrating is Simone Biles, an artistic gymnast whose gravity-defying feats have captivated audiences worldwide. Biles' unparalleled talent and resilience have earned her numerous Olympic and World Championship medals, solidifying her status as one of the greatest gymnasts ever.

These women athletes have not only achieved remarkable success in their respective sports but have also paved the way for future generations of female athletes to dream big and break boundaries.

As we reflect on Women's History Month, let us celebrate the achievements of Serena Williams, Simone Biles, and countless other women athletes who continue to inspire us with their extraordinary talents, perseverance, and passion for the game. Their legacy is a reminder that the sky is the limit for women in sports and beyond.

To learn how to prevent foot pain, download our eBook ["The Essential Guide to Stop Foot Pain in Women"](#).



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—Dr. Rion Berg

