

Other information:

Shoes etc:

Wider Fit Shoes: www.widerfitshoes.co.uk Tel: 01933 311077

Simply Feet Tel: 0845 3700380
www.simplyfeet.co.uk

Insoles and Orthotics:

Healthstep:
<http://www.healthstep.co.uk/insoles>

:

Health and Wellbeing Information:

NHS Inform: Tel: 0800 224488
<http://www.nhsinform.co.uk/msk/>

*Health and Wellbeing advice/support Lifestyle
Advisor Service*
<http://www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/lass>
Tel: 01896 827235

Walk It – (supported walking activity)
http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/1504/walking_cycling_and_horse_riding/311/walking_for_health
Tel: 018350825060



Hallux Rigidus (Painful and stiff big toe joint)



Information for Patients

The aim of this leaflet is to give you some understanding of the problems you may have with your big toe. The leaflet has been divided into sections as follows: **1.** What is hallux rigidus? **2.** What causes it, **3.** Treatment of hallux rigidus and **4.** hallux rigidus Surgery

1. What is Hallux Rigidus?

Hallux rigidus is osteoarthritis (wear and tear) of the joint at the base of the big toe. The condition can be due to minor injury of the joint like repeated stubbing of the toe or start more gradually from wear and tear of the joint. Symptoms include:

- Pain on movement of your big toe, for example when walking, standing, climbing stairs.
- Limited movement of your big toe joint.
- Enlarged big toe joint causing problems with shoes
- Pain on wearing high heels, or unsupportive footwear.
- Pain and stiffness may be worse on first steps in the morning and may be worse in cold, damp weather.



2. What causes hallux rigidus ?

In many cases it is not clear why hallux rigidus develops. It can be due to:

- Injury
- Overuse, for example jobs that involve a lot of kneeling or squatting, certain sports e.g. football
- Secondary to conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis or gout
- Altered foot function

3. What can I do about it?

One of the most important things you can do to help is to wear the right shoes. You should try to wear flat, well fitting shoes with plenty of room for your toes. Please see our simple guide on shoe and slipper fitting. Shoes with laces or adjustable strap are best. Avoid high-heeled shoes with pointed toes Also avoid shoes which are not wide enough to fit well across the widest part of your foot (across the big toe joint). Avoid shoes with flexible soles. Shoes with stiffer, inflexible soles which are slightly rocker shaped across the forefoot can limit bending of the joint during walking and reduce painful symptoms (see picture).

You can take over-the-counter medication such as paracetamol or ibuprofen. If in doubt please discuss this with your pharmacist or GP.

A special insole may reduce the bending of the joint and relieve symptoms - see links on reverse of this leaflet.

None of these treatments will cure a hallux rigidus but they may help manage the problem.

4. Surgery

If these suggested treatments do not help and your hallux rigidus continues to be painful you may be referred to an orthopaedic clinic to be considered for an operation.

An operation will fuse your big toe joint surgically and may improve your symptoms. It is important to realise that you will be unable to bend your big toe joint after surgery.

An operation should only be considered after all other treatments have been tried for at least 3 months. The recovery time after surgery can be several months with no putting weight on the foot for the first 6 weeks.

Please note you may not be seen by a surgeon at your first clinic appointment. Please see our separate leaflet on hallux rigidus surgery for more details.