

Corns & Calluses

Thick, Hardened Bumps of Skin on Your Feet?

There are a variety of skin problems that can develop on your feet due to genetics, poor footwear, the environment you live in and how well you take care of your feet. Palm Desert, CA foot specialist, Dr. Harvey Danciger, treats all sorts of lumps and bumps and some of the more common ones are corns and calluses.

What Are Corns and Calluses?

Corns and calluses are really just layers of hardened skin. When your feet and toes are exposed to repeated friction and pressure, the area being affected needs to protect itself. Your skin's natural defense mechanism is to build up layers of thicker, hardened skin.

Calluses often form on the ball of your foot, your heel and underneath your big toe. They are generally a larger, more flattened area of thick skin. A corn on the other hand is more localized with a small circular shape. Corns can also develop on the ball of your foot but are commonly found on the toes. They can develop on the outside of your little toe from rubbing against a tight pair of shoes. They can also form in between toes from the toes rubbing together. A corn in between toes is considered a "soft corn" while a corn on a bony part of a toe is called a "hard corn."

What Causes Corns and Calluses?

This is a great question because understanding what causes these skin irritations is the first step in preventing them from occurring. There are several situations that can lead to the development of a corn or callus but the underlying cause usually has to do with the foot experiencing too much friction or pressure over time. Some of the reasons a corn or callus may develop include:

- Wearing shoes that are too tight which squeeze and compress areas of your feet.
- Wearing high heel shoes that put pressure on your feet and squeeze your toes
- Wearing shoes or sandals without socks leaving skin vulnerable to friction
- Wearing shoes that have a thin sole, which leads to extra pressure on the ball of your foot.
- Having an abnormality such as a hammertoe or bunion, which exposes the toe and foot to extra pressure or friction.
- Having an abnormality in your gait, or the way you walk can lead to pressure points on your feet.

How can Corns and Calluses Be Treated?

Many times corns and calluses are not painful and can be treated by simply eliminating the source of friction that caused them in the first place. There are other times though when they can persist or keep recurring and become quite painful. When this happens, there are a few treatment options that Dr. Danciger can provide:

- Trimming down the thickened skin with a scalpel.
- Applying a patch with salicylic acid that helps pare down the thickened skin.
- Antibiotic ointment to reduce any infection that may be present
- Custom orthotics to support your feet and reduce areas of pressure
- Surgery to align a bone deformity that is causing the corn or callus

It is very important to make a note that you should never try to shave off or cut a corn or callus off of your foot or toe. This only puts you at risk for injury and possible infection. This is especially true if you have diabetes. If you have diabetes, Dr. Danciger will provide a very specific treatment plan that is safe for your feet.

Corns and calluses are typically not a serious condition to be concerned about. With appropriate self-care and direction from Dr. Danciger, your feet can become clear and healthy once again. For help with your corns and calluses, please make an appointment with our podiatric office today. You can call (760) 568-0108 or make an appointment directly from our homepage.