

Neuroma

What is a Neuroma?

A neuroma is a painful condition resulting from a thickening of nerve tissue. It can happen in many areas in the body but common in the foot is a kind called Morton's neuroma. This type of neuroma affects the nerve tissue that leads to the toes. A neuroma happens as a result of compression and irritation on the nerve and can lead to permanent nerve damage if not properly monitored or cared for.

Who is at Risk for Developing a Neuroma?

Anything that presses against or irritates a nerve can result in a neuroma leaving anyone causing that at risk. There are a few specific causes known to put a person more at risk for this painful foot condition:

- Running or being involved in high impact sports where repetitive stress is put on feet.
- Sustaining an injury or trauma to the foot.
- Having a condition such as bunions, hammertoes or flat feet.
- Wearing shoes with a tight or tapered toe box or high heel type shoes that force toes to be squeezed into the toe box.

What Does a Neuroma Feel Like?

Having a neuroma such as Morton's neuroma in the foot will be quite uncomfortable. Patients often describe one or more of the following symptoms:

- Burning or tingling in the toes
- Sharp pain in the ball of the foot
- Feeling like your sock is bunched up under your foot
- Having the sensation like you are standing on a pebble or something is in the ball of your foot.

Neuromas are typically progressive. Symptoms can vary depending on the severity of the neuroma. Symptoms can come and go depending on choice of footwear or activity. Over time though, symptoms can remain for days and even weeks at a time and worsen as the nerve damage becomes permanent.

How Can a Neuroma be Treated?

Depending on the severity of your neuroma, there are several treatment options that we offer at our podiatric office to help relieve your symptoms. Dr. Danciger will do a thorough diagnosis of your condition and choose options appropriate for you. Treatment options include:

- Anti-inflammatory medications
- Custom orthotics designed specifically for your feet to relieve pressure
- Icing
- Padding and arch supports
- Avoiding activities that aggravate the neuroma
- Steroid/cortisone injection therapy
- Laser treatments
- Modifying footwear
- Surgical removal of the neuroma

Surgery is typically a last resort option if a neuroma does not respond to conservative treatment as it comes with a risk of permanent numbness in the affected toes.

It is never a good idea to ignore foot pain. If the symptoms explained here describe your foot problem, contact Dr. Danciger as soon as possible. A complete examination will be needed to identify the true source of your pain as injuries such as stress fractures have some mirroring symptoms. If you want to learn more about keeping feet healthy, Dr. Danciger has a complimentary book, *Why Do My Feet Hurt?* which can be ordered on our website homepage. Feel free to order this book, or if you have specific questions call our office to schedule an appointment with Dr. Danciger at (760) 568-0108.