

Interdigital Neuroma

Interdigital neuroma tends to be a painful condition affecting the ball of the foot, commonly between the area lying between the third and fourth toes. This neuroma might feel as if you are standing on a pebble inside of the shoe or your sock has a fold in it.

Some texts refer to this condition as Morton's neuroma, or Morton's metatarsalgia. But basically they are the same thing.

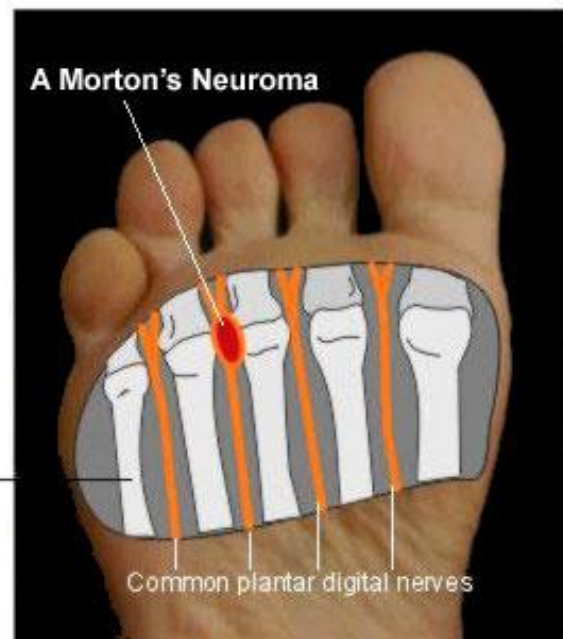
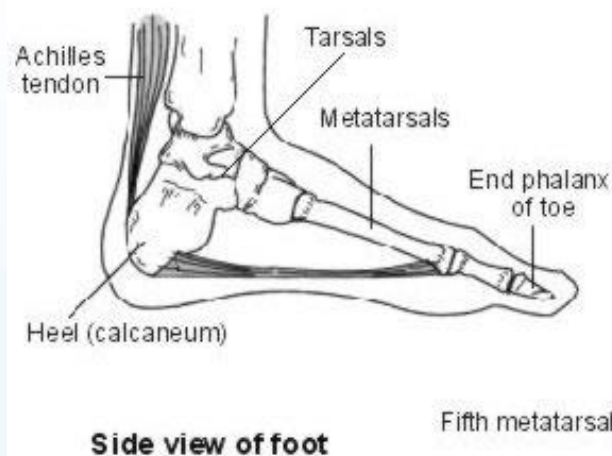
An interdigital neuroma involves a thickening of the tissues that surround one of the nerves that leads to the toes. This condition can cause a burning, sharp pain within the ball of the foot. The toes might burn, sting or feel numb.

Shoes with high heels are linked to the development of the neuroma. Many individuals experience relief from switching to a shoe with a lower heel and wider toe box.

It is rare to get more than one neuroma in the foot. And the pain tends to be between the third and fourth digit of the foot.

Interdigital Neuroma Anatomy

Many bones are within the foot. They are briefly divided into the phalanges, the metatarsals and the tarsal bones. Tarsal bones tend to be the larger ones forming the back section of the foot, with the calcaneus being the largest of all the bones in the foot. Five metatarsal bones are in the foot numbered from first to fifth. The first metatarsal is the largest and joins with the big toe. Each toe is composed of three phalanges, except that of the big toe that only has two.



How to Treat an Interdigital Neuroma:

1. Therapy

Foot pads and arch supports that fit inside of the shoe will help to reduce pressure on the nerves. You can purchase them over-the-counter, or you might have to have them custom-made. They are molded to fit the exact contours of your individual feet.

2. Injections

Some individuals are able to find relief from a steroid injection into the painful site.

3. Decompression Surgery

In certain cases, surgeons are able to relieve the pressure along this nerve by cutting into nearby structures, such as that of the ligament binding together some of those bones within the front part of the foot.

4. Removal of the Nerve

Surgically removing the growth might be required if other treatments aren't providing an ample amount of pain relief. Even though surgery is often successful, this procedure can end up causing permanent numbness within the affected toes.

5. Ice

Apply ice to the area for 5-10 minutes at a time three to five times per day to help reduce pain. Make sure to wrap the ice in a towel to help minimize frostbite from setting in.

Tips:

- Wearing shoes with high heels or those that are too tight and don't fit properly can place added pressure on the ball of the foot and the toes.
- People born with hammertoes, bunions and high arches are at an increased risk of developing these neuromas.
- Sports involving tight shoes, such as rock climbing or snow skiing, can place added pressure on the toes.
- Try changing out your current shoes for those with a wider toe box to allow your feet room to move.
- Reduce activities that are subjecting your feet to a lot of impact.