

MORTON'S NEUROMA



Overview

This condition is a thickening of the nerve sheath that surrounds a nerve in the ball of the foot. It most commonly develops between the third and fourth toes. It also commonly occurs between the second and third toes.

Causes

Morton's neuroma develops as a response to irritation, pressure or injury to a plantar nerve. It is commonly linked to footwear - especially women's shoes - that put pressure on the toes and don't provide proper space for them. High-heeled shoes and shoes with narrow toe boxes are common culprits.

Symptoms

Symptoms of Morton's neuroma include a sharp, burning pain in the ball of the foot that may radiate to the toes. The toes adjacent to the neuroma may sting or tingle, or they may feel numb. The condition may also cause the sensation of standing on a pebble beneath the ball of the foot.

Treatment

Treatment depends on the severity of the neuroma. Conservative treatment options include flat shoes with roomy toe boxes, and the use of inserts, pads or cushions. Corticosteroid injections may also provide pain relief. If these options are not successful, surgery may be needed to decompress the nerve or to remove the enlarged portion.