

What is an Ingrown Toenail?

An ingrown toenail affects the large toe in most cases but can also affect the other toes. An ingrown toenail occurs when a sliver of nail pierces the flesh at the side of the nail. The condition can be extremely painful and occasionally the toe can become infected. If an infection is present, the toe will become very inflamed and can produce pus and blood.

What causes it?

There are many causes of ingrown toenails but did you know that genetics often play a part? Conditions of the foot such as bunions can also be the cause of ingrown toenails.

Toenails come in all shapes and sizes. Often the nail can be wide and appear fan shaped. Rather than the nail growing straight it may grow into the flesh resulting in an ingrown toenail.

Many of us also cut our toenails incorrectly. The nails should be trimmed straight across but we do tend to curve the nails at the edges. We also cut the nails too short. This can encourage the nail to grow into the nail bed.

Where are we?

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Ingrown Toenail



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What causes it continued...

Our footwear choices can also lead to ingrown toenails. Tight shoes and socks can push the nail into the flesh and can cause the nail to become ingrown.

We do find that the most common cause of an ingrown toenail is incorrectly trimming toenails. If you do have problems trimming your toenails a Podiatrist can help.

What will happen if I leave it untreated?

Ingrown toenails can become very painful if left untreated. Infection can take hold quickly if the toe is not treated. In severe cases, the infection can spread to the rest of the toe and even the foot.

What can help?

There are a number of ways that can help relieve the pain of ingrown toenails, including some which you can do yourself at home. The home care techniques are always the best place to start, however it is always recommended to seek advice on the possible treatment options by a Podiatrist.

What are the treatment options?

Ingrown toenail management can be carried out by your Podiatrist. If your ingrown toenail isn't too severe, it can usually be trimmed by your podiatrist. He or she will lift the edge of your nail and cut away the ingrown section. A local anaesthetic can be administered if your toe is too painful to touch.

If you are beyond self-treatment because an infection has started to set in then you need to book an appointment to see a Podiatrist as soon as possible. Your Podiatrist will be able to remove the sliver of nail which has become ingrown and cut the nail to try to prevent it from becoming ingrown again.

If the toenail is causing extreme pain and the area is infected and swollen, the Podiatrist may have to perform surgery on the toe to remedy the situation. This could mean having some or all of the toenail or surrounding skin cut and removed. The procedure is carried out under a local anesthetic and is a permanent solution.

Biomechanics Package at Orkney Podiatry

We are delighted to offer a Biomechanics Package at Orkney Podiatry.

The package includes:

- Full assessment [up to 1 hour]
- Comprehensive bespoke exercise plan
- Massage ball
- Theraband
- 4 week review appointment
- Option of adding in Orthotics

**Please contact the clinic on
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further information.**

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