



Podiatry &  
Chiropractic  
Clinic™



# 7 FOOT CONDITIONS THAT AFFECT FOOT HEALTH



## **7 THINGS THAT NEED TREATING FOR HAPPIER FEET**

1. Problem nails
2. Corns & Callus
3. Verrucae
4. Athlete's Foot
5. Chillblaines
6. Cracked Heels
7. Skin conditions and circulatory problems



## PROBLEM NAILS

### Thickened Nails

Nails can thicken up and become uncomfortable and painful for a variety of reasons.

Trauma to the nail bed by stubbing your toe or dropping something heavy on it can damage the nail bed permanently. The nail bed starts to change shape and appears no longer flat but raised. Once a nail bed is damaged it is damaged forever, causing the nail to grow differently. It will grow up thicker in that one place where it was damaged or over the entire nail bed, causing unusual shapes in the nail.

## Fungal Nails

Once a nail bed is damaged, the integrity of it has changed and it is more susceptible to fungus. It is best to treat the fungus early before it takes a hold. Over the counter fungal nail treatments are not successful for everyone, however we have a solution that has proven highly successful with our patients.

The appearance of fungus comes in many guises. The nail can go white, yellow or brown, in places or all over. White spots can appear on the nail or fungus can grow up from underneath the nail causing debris to proliferate away from under the nail. Don't be deceived that the stain on your nails is purely from the nail varnish you have worn all summer. Prolonged nail varnish wearing is unhealthy, stopping natural light getting to your toenails and can make your nails more susceptible to fungus.





## Psoriatic Nails

Fungal nails can often get mis-diagnosed for psoriatic nails which can look similar but tend to affect all the nails and have a flaky and crumbly appearance. A person does not have to have psoriasis to have psoriatic nails and can spend a lot of money on fungal nail treatments that will not work. Come to us for a diagnosis.

## Ingrowing Nails

Ingrowing nails can occur from cutting your nails incorrectly and leaving a nail spike behind. Some people's nail plates are too broad causing them to have trouble every time they need to cut their nails, by not being able to get the corner of the nail out of the flesh, known as the sulcus. Other people have involuted nails which curl around and inwards as they meet the fleshy sides of the nail plate.

Nail spikes cause the body to produce tissue to heal the problem, but this only makes things worse. The granulating tissue as it is called, keeps on producing until you have a toenail like the photo. Left untreated in-growing nails get infected, causing redness, swelling, pain, bleeding and puss. Only nail surgery will resolve this. We offer an appointment within 10 days. We will also show you how to cut your nails depending on your individual nail type and shape.





## Ram's Nails

Medication and illness can also affect nails and can cause them to grow like a ram's horn, these become so difficult to cut they get left and often grow into the skin or the neighbouring toe. We cut these nails back to a normal length and thin them down for you, making them comfortable again so you can walk with ease.

## Subungual Bruises

Bruises show up as black marks under the nail from a trauma or from pressure of footwear. However, one must always be vigilant that it is not something harmful like skin cancer. For those of you who remember Bob Marley, he was very sadly taken by a malignant melanoma under his toe nail.

Nails are an indicator of your general health. If you have a health incident it shows up on your nails in the form of a horizontal line. Vertical lines can indicate heart conditions so don't dismiss the fact that your nails are changing nor worry unnecessarily. Come to us for a diagnosis to put your mind at rest.





## CORNS, CALLUS & VERRUCAE

Corns and Callus are areas of hard skin which develop on the soles of your feet over joints and between your toes.

Corns and Callus are caused by pressure and rubbing on the joints of the feet – heels, balls of the feet and the joints between your toes. This may be due to poor gait (the way you stand, walk and run), ill-fitting footwear and foot type – high or low arched feet. They are the body's way of 'protecting a site' but when left untreated can cause huge discomfort and affect the way you stand and walk.

Often you may feel the irritating and painful 'grain of sand' digging in over a joint in the foot or a large area of hard skin pinching as you walk.

Corns and callus get misdiagnosed as verrucae and vice versa. Verrucae are a viral condition that affects the surface of the skin and gives the appearance of black dots. Verrucae produce callus which is different in appearance from regular callus but can also change under pressure and friction and cause corns.

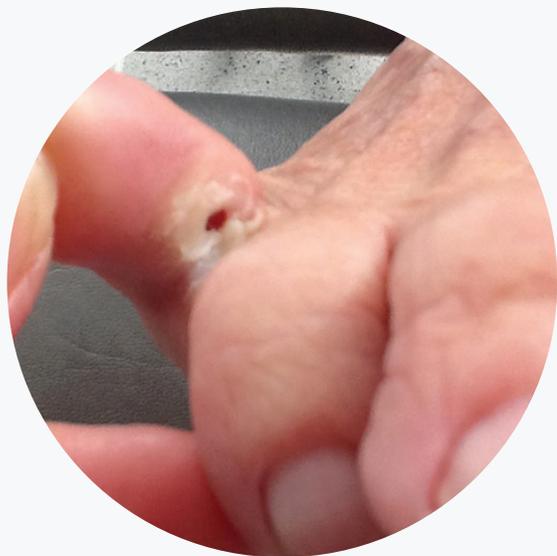
## ATHLETE'S FOOT AND CHILBLAINS

**Athlete's foot** is a fungal infection of the skin, usually found between the toes. The infection which is red and white in appearance can spread causing significant discomfort, a break in the skin, itching, and pain.

You are most exposed to the fungus that causes athlete's foot in a gym, shower, or pool where people walk around barefoot. Fungus tends to thrive in warm, damp areas.

Wearing shoes that are warm and damp can cause the fungus to grow and spread. The condition is highly contagious, and it can spread to other areas of the skin, including the hands, groin, scalp, and nails.

Chilblains are similar to Athletes foot in the fact they are marks on the skin which have a red, blotchy appearance and either sting, burn or feel sore. They are found around the tips of the toes and in worse cases the toes go a purple colour and produce dark marks like bruises. The skin usually stays intact and feels very cold to touch.





## CRACKED HEELS

Cracked heels are when the skin around the back of the heels builds up and produces tough callus that splits open causing a deep crack called a fissure. They are very painful. The cause of cracked heels can be attributed to dry skin, poorly fitting shoes that do not have a sufficient sole to absorb shock, being overweight and a heavy heel strike.

Only having the callus removed by a podiatrist and applying specialist creams, regular aftercare and changes in the causes will reduce the possibility of cracked heels re-occurring.

## SKIN CONDITIONS AND CIRCULATORY DISORDERS

There are many other skin conditions that affect the skin on the feet, common ones being eczema, psoriasis and dry skin that can look like a white presentation of Athletes foot. If your skin looks dry and feels itchy, try applying an antifungal cream to rule out fungus.



Circulatory conditions affect the vessels in the feet and legs causing the skin to look brown and blotchy, known as hemochromatosis. The colour brown can vary from light to dark brown and can get confused for freckles.

Varicose veins in the legs cause blood to pool back into the lesser vessels giving the feet the appearance that they have black spaghetti on them known as telangiectasia.





Swelling in one leg or both is known as oedema

Reddish purple skin indicates poor circulation



When the feet go white, are freezing cold, painful, pulse-less, have tingly feelings or have paralysis these are signs of extremely limited or no blood flow and is known as acute ischaemia and will need immediate hospital attention.