



chance of irreversible damage to the joint. In many other cases, however, some type of treatment is needed.

Early treatments are aimed at easing the pain of bunions, but they won't reverse the deformity itself. These options include:

- **Changes in footwear.** Wearing the right kind of shoes is very important. Choose shoes that have a wide toe box and forgo those with pointed toes or high heels which may aggravate the condition.
- **Padding.** Pads placed over the area of the bunion can help minimize pain. You can get bunion pads from your podiatric surgeon or purchase them at a drug store.
- **Activity modifications.** Avoid activity that causes bunion pain, including standing for long periods of time.

- **Medications.** Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as ibuprofen, may help to relieve pain.
- **Icing.** Applying an ice pack several times a day helps reduce inflammation and pain.
- **Injection therapy.** Although rarely used in bunion treatment, injections of corticosteroids may be useful in treating the inflamed bursa (fluid-filled sac located in a joint) sometimes seen with bunions.
- **Orthotic devices.** In some cases, custom orthotic devices may be provided by the podiatric surgeon.

When Is Surgery Needed?

When the pain of a bunion interferes with daily activities, it's time to discuss surgical options with your podiatric surgeon. Together you can decide if surgery is best for you.

Recent advances in surgical techniques have led to a very high success rate in treating bunions.

A variety of surgical procedures are performed to treat bunions. The procedures are designed to remove the "bump" of bone, correct the changes in the bony structure of the foot, as well as correct soft tissue changes that may also have occurred. The goal of these corrections is the elimination of pain.

In selecting the procedure or combination of procedures for your particular case, the podiatric surgeon will take into consideration the extent of your deformity based on the x-ray findings, your age, your activity level, and other factors. The length of the recovery period will vary, depending on the procedure or procedures performed. ▲



**American College of
Foot and Ankle Surgeons**

This information has been prepared by the Consumer Education Committee of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons, a professional society of 5,700 podiatric foot and ankle surgeons. Members of the College are Doctors of Podiatric Medicine who have received additional training through surgical residency programs.

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