

Footwear

- Avoid high heels & shoes that are too tight!
- You should have a snug heel, that does not allow much rocking of your foot during walking.
- Work with your physician to find footwear that allows your foot to maintain a neutral angle at the ankle.
- Orthotics should be taken to the shoe store when you are trying on new shoes to assure a good fit.
- If you were diagnosed with a Morton's foot (longer 2nd toe than 1st toe), then a pad to support your big toe should be used.

Sports

- If your discomfort began after excessive jogging or a particular sporting activity, then this activity should be avoided until you are pain free.
- Sports that do not often cause this type of pain include: rowing, swimming &/or cycling.

Exercise

Do not begin any of the following exercises until you are free of your pain. Also, always stretch before & after the exercises

- Walk in a swimming pool & take long strides. The decreased gravity effect of the water decreases the stress on these muscles in walking.
- Spend 5-15 minutes a day picking things up with your toes. Start with light objects like Kleenex & then move on as your toe strength & dexterity increase. The divine power would not have given us toes if s/he didn't mean for us to use them.
- When you feel up to it, walking on a wet, sandy beach with special attention to toe-off will allow your muscles to strengthen & your spirit as well by the power of the seas. Once mastered, the next step is walking along dry, sandy beaches. Take long strides at a comfortable pace.

Sit down comfortably & cross your ankle over your thigh (see figure A). Use one hand to bend your toe & twist your foot inwards (figure B). Use your leg muscle to try & bring you foot & ankle back to the start position for 15 seconds. Relax your contraction see if you can point your toe more & twist your foot even more inwards. Repeat this exercise 3 times and then 3 times a day. Repeat the same exercise, but this time twist your foot outwards (treats the big toe extensor muscle.)

This stretch can also be performed in a nice warm bath or afterwards for maximum stretch!



A Dr. Scholl's foot pad can be cut-out so that the prominence beneath you second toe is not supported & a felt pad or 2 can be used beneath your big toe to even out the area (see figure). This can be inserted in your shoe, but will require you to add pads or replace them as they become worn. You can also have a shoe-repairman alter the soles of your shoe to make a more permanent change.



Follow this sequence:

1. You are sitting comfortably with your feet flat on the floor (figure A)
2. Press the toes of your feet into the ground for 5 seconds (figure B) & then return to the starting position for 5 seconds.
3. Lift the toes of your feet off the ground for 5 seconds (figure C) & then return to the starting position for 5 seconds.
4. Repeat steps 2-3 for 6-15 repetitions.

Perform this balancing exercise every • hour when sitting for extended periods. Perform this exercise only after mastering stretching without discomfort.

