



What Is a Bunion?

A bunion, also known as *hallux valgus* is a deformity caused by a genetic weakness in your foot and is often described as an enlargement of bone or tissue around the joint of your big toe. When pressure from your shoes is applied to the side of the big toe (hallux), it forces the toe inwards, sometimes over or under the other toes, causing the surrounding tissue to become swollen and sore. Tight fitting shoes are not the sole cause of bunions, it's more likely genetic, however, improperly fitted shoes can make matters worse and increase the pain and severity of the bunion.

If you detect irritated skin around the joint of your big toe, pain when walking, joint redness and pain, and a possible shift of the big toe, chances are you may have a bunion and need to have it treated by a foot specialist or chiropodist before problems arise with the mechanical function of the forefoot.

Treatment of a bunion varies, depending on the detection and treatment stage of the bunion. In early stages, bunions can be treated and its growth slowed down with changes in footwear, night splints and orthotics. Other treatment options include anti-inflammatory or injection therapy to decrease the inflammation. In very advanced cases, you may require a procedure that will surgically realign the toe.

Whatever the case or severity of your bunion may be, ensure that you have a chiropodist check it out as soon as possible to ensure the growth is properly treated and any pain you may be enduring is properly managed.



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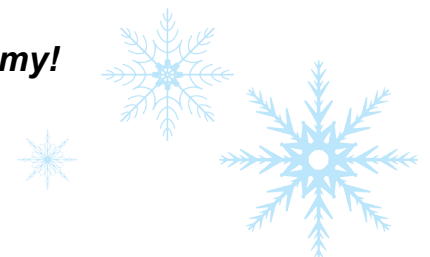
Surviving Winter

Winter is in full force. The days are shorter, the nights get colder and even the best of us can feel a little down. Many people feel a lack of motivation, low energy, even mild depression, which are all characteristics of the Winter Blues. Here are a few tips to help you survive winter and keep yourself feeling normal:



- 1. Take A Sun Bath.** It's important to get outside for a dose of natural morning light. A 10-minute walk in the morning light will help re-set your body clock and boost mood. Another option: bundle up, find a bench in the sun and take a few moments to catch some nourishing rays.
- 2. Exercise, Exercise, Exercise.** It increases serotonin levels, which in turn helps banish the blues. Exercise outside and you'll get an even greater boost. Studies have shown that one hour of outdoor exercise had the same benefits as 2.5 hours of light treatment indoors.
- 3. Avoid Hibernation, you're not a bear.** Take a class, go see a movie, have dinner out with a friend or loved one, whatever it takes, just find yourself a spirit-boosting activity and keep yourself engaged with the world.
- 4. Watch your cravings!** When your serotonin levels are low, one of things your body tends to do is to crave food high in carbohydrates, especially high-sugar foods like junk food and pop because they raise serotonin levels. Make healthy carbohydrate choices instead that will also help your body create serotonin such as nuts, beans, lots of veggies and whole grains.
- 5. Take up a winter activity.** Taking up an activity that can only be done in the winter is a good way to look forward to winter, rather than hating it. Cross-country skiing, downhill skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, winter hiking & cycling, ice skating, sledding, tubing, winter photography, playing/listening to music, winter nature observation, or astronomy, all are good ways to enjoy winter.

Embrace winter, and it cannot be your enemy!



Ask Brian — Question of the Month

*My feet are so dry this time of year and I already use cream.
What should I do to help dry feet??*

Many of our patients have the same concern as we all tend to have drier skin this time of the year. There are things we can do to help keep the skin on our feet healthy. In our office we recommend the use of **Gormel Cream**, especially to our diabetic patients.



Gormel cream is a highly effective skin conditioner and is designed to moisturize and soften dry, cracked, and callused skin on the feet, hands and elbows. We specifically recommend it for severe conditions such as cracks or heel fissures and is diabetic friendly.

Many patients ask if it is advisable to soak their feet to help soften them. The simple answer is NO. Soaking the feet in hot water actually has the opposite

effect and will dry the skin. Going barefoot indoors will tend to cause dry skin so we suggest you wear socks and apply moisturizers.

Using these tips and moisturizing twice daily with the proper moisturizer will help keep the skin on your feet healthy.



Bring the Warmth of Laughter with These Icy Jokes

What's the difference between an iceberg and a clothes brush?
~ One crushes boats and the other brushes coats!

How do you keep from getting cold feet?
~ Don't go around BRRRfooted!

Why is the slippery ice like music?
~ If you don't C sharp - you'll B flat!

What's an ig?
~ A snow house without a loo!

What did the big furry hat say to the warm woolly scarf?
~ You hang around while I go on ahead.



Resource: Icy Jokes at <http://www.athropolis.com/jokes.htm>



When Should You Call A Chiroprapist?

- If you are experiencing pain in your foot or ankle that won't go away.
- If you have heel pain that is limiting you or making your daily activities difficult.
- If you have thick, yellow toenails that are hard to cut.
- If you are diabetic and have poor circulation or limited feeling in your feet.
- If the skin on your feet is severely dry, peeling, or cracking.
- If you are developing corns, callouses, or blisters.
- If you want to avoid painful bunions or hammertoes like your grandmother.
- If you need help finding proper-fitting shoes.



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Potato Lover's Soup with Crispy Bacon

Ingredients

3 large (8 ounce) baked russet potatoes

3 strips bacon

3 garlic cloves, minced

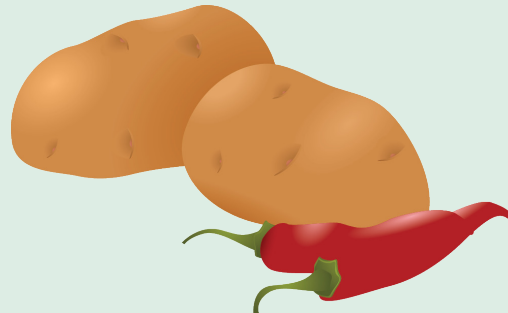
4 scallions, thinly sliced

2 3/4 cup reduced sodium chicken broth

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon hot pepper sauce

3/4 cup fat free half and half



Instructions

1. Leaving skin on, coarsely chop potatoes; set aside
2. Cook bacon in large nonstick saucepan over medium heat until crisp. Drain on paper towels and set aside. Pour off and discard all but 1 teaspoon of drippings.
3. Add garlic and half of scallions to drippings in saucepan. Cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 3 minutes. Add broth, salt, pepper sauce, and potatoes, mashing potatoes with wooden spoon to break them up slightly. Bring mixture to boil. Reduce heat and simmer until heated through (2-3 minutes).
4. Stir in half and half and return to simmer. Serve soup sprinkled with crumbled bacon and remaining scallions.

Tip: This soup is especially convenient if you have leftover baked potatoes on hand.

**Battle the
Winter Blues!**