

TOE/TOENAIL PROBLEMS

DIGITAL/TOE DEFORMITIES

- A deformed toe is one of the more common conditions to afflict the foot. This includes:
 - a) HAMMERTOES
 - b) MALLET TOES
 - c) OVERLAPPING TOES

HAMMERTOES

- They are either a flexible or rigid contraction usually affecting the second, third, fourth or fifth toes.
- This is where muscle imbalance leads to bending or “buckling” toe joints.
- These buckled or contracted positions create any number of problems within and on top of the toe deformity.
- If left untreated, these conditions can cause pain or progress to ulcers or infections.
- Flexible hammertoes refer to reducible hammertoes in contrast to rigid hammertoes where the deformities are fixed.

MALLET TOES

- A mallet toe is similar to a hammertoe, except the deformity occurs closer to the end of the toe.

OVERLAPPING TOES

- Overlapping toes are malpositioned from birth or acquired over time, often producing some abnormality in the tendon, ligaments or skin. This can lead to painful corns over time.

TREATMENT OPTIONS

- **CONSERVATIVE** Options can consist of one or more of the following:
 - a) Debridement of corns, digital splinting and/or padding of the toe.
 - b) Orthotics or inserts in shoes to correct irregular foot biomechanics
 - c) Injections to relieve pain and inflammation.
 - d) Larger or extra depth shoes to accommodate toe deformities.
- **SURGICAL** Options sometimes used in combination and help to straighten and re-align the toes by cutting the bone, tendon, joints and/or ligaments:
 - a) Tenotomy and Capsulotomy
 - b) Arthroplasty
 - c) Fusion
 - d) Arthroplasty with Tendon Relocation
 - e) Arthroplasty with Implant Surgery
 - f) Derotational/Realignment Procedure for Overlapping Toe

TOENAIL PROBLEMS

- The following are some common toenail problems:
 - a) **BONE SPUR UNDER THE NAIL**
 - i. Sometimes deformed toenails are associated with a small bone spur at the tip of the toe under the nail.
 - ii. This can cause considerable discomfort at the nail or beneath; also skin between the nail and the bone can become irritated and result in a painful corn or callus.
 - iii. Treatments may include removing the bone spur as well as the nail.
 - b) **THICK NAIL(HYPERTROPHIED) & FUNGUS NAIL**
 - i. This may stem from a nail fungus, nail injury or can be inherited.
 - ii. Fungal nails can often be treated with topical or oral antifungal medications.
 - c) **OTHER TREATMENT OPTIONS MAY INCLUDE:**
 - i. Surgical removal of the toenail and destruction of the nail root with or without laser.
 - ii. Permanent removal of one or both sides of a toenail.
 - iii. Removal of fungal tissue if present, and toenail root treatment via chemical cauterization.