

NorthPointe Foot & Ankle
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NorthPointe News



Foot & Ankle Special



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Additional Hours For Patient Convenience

Beginning Saturday, September 29, NorthPointe Foot & Ankle will be open for office visits on one Saturday per month. The office will be open from 9 am - 12 pm.

"We understand that it is difficult to take time off of work during the weekdays for appointments," said Dr. Charles Kissel. "In addition to offering some weekday evening hours, we now have staffing in place to be able to serve patients on a Saturday."



Office hours during the weekdays will remain:

Monday	9am-7pm
Tuesday	9am-6pm
Wednesday	8am-5pm
Thursday	9am-7pm
Friday	8am-5pm
Select Saturdays	9am-12pm <i>New</i>

As always, The NorthPointe team is available 24-hours a day for emergencies and hospital visits.

Convenient appointments may be made by calling 248-545-0100 or send a request online at www.michiganfootcare.com.

HAMMERTOES

Hammertoe is a contracture (bending) of one or both joints of the second, third, fourth, or fifth (little) toes. This abnormal bending can put pressure on the toe when wearing shoes, causing problems to develop.

Hammertoes usually start out as mild deformities and get progressively worse over time. In the earlier stages, hammertoes are flexible and the symptoms can often be managed with noninvasive measures. But if left untreated, hammertoes can become more rigid and will not respond to non-surgical treatment.

Because of the progressive nature of hammertoes, they should receive early attention. Hammertoes never get better without some kind of intervention.

The most common cause of hammertoe is a muscle/tendon imbalance. This imbalance, which leads to a bending of the toe, results from mechanical (structural) changes in the foot that occur over time in some people. Hammertoes may be aggravated by shoes that don't fit properly. A hammertoe may result if a toe is too long and is forced into a cramped position when a tight shoe is worn. Occasionally, a hammertoe is the result of an earlier trauma to the toe. In some people, hammertoes are inherited.

Symptoms

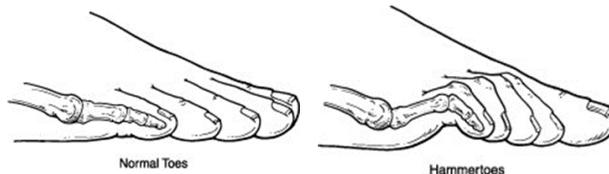
Common symptoms of hammertoes include:

- Pain or irritation of the affected toe when wearing shoes.
- Corns and calluses (a buildup of skin) on the toe, between two toes, or on the ball of the foot. Corns are caused by constant friction against the shoe. They may be soft or hard, depending upon their location.
- Inflammation, redness, or a burning sensation
- Contracture of the toe
- In more severe cases of hammertoe, open sores may form.

Treatment

A number of non-surgical measures can be undertaken:

- **Padding corns and calluses.** Your NorthPointe surgeon can provide or prescribe pads designed to shield corns from irritation. If you want to try over-the-counter pads, avoid the medicated types. Medicated pads are generally not recommended because they may contain a small amount of acid that can be harmful.
- **Changes in footwear.** Avoid shoes with pointed toes, shoes that are too short, or shoes with high heels – conditions that can force your toe against the front of the shoe. Instead, choose comfortable shoes with a deep, roomy toe box and heels no higher than two inches.
- **Orthotic devices.** A custom orthotic device placed in your shoe may help control the muscle/tendon imbalance.
- **Injection therapy.** Corticosteroid injections are sometimes used to ease pain and inflammation caused by hammertoe.
- **Medications.** Oral nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, such as ibuprofen, may be recommended to reduce pain and inflammation.
- **Splinting/strapping.** Splints or small straps may be applied by the surgeon to realign the bent toe.



In some cases, usually when the hammertoe has become more rigid and painful, or when an open sore has developed, surgery is needed.

To receive our monthly newsletter, send your email address to:
Doctors@NorthPointeFoot.com

Bone Spurs

Bone spurs are a very common foot problem. In the feet, they develop most frequently in the heel, near the toes, and on top of the big toe joint. The spurs are small outgrowths of bone. In and of themselves, they are generally harmless. However, their location may cause friction or irritation from shoes or other foot structures, which can lead to other foot problems.

Heel spurs refer specifically to bone spurs in the heel. Heel spurs are growths of bone on the underside, forepart of the heel bone and occur when the plantar fibrous band pulls at its attachment to the heel bone. This area of the heel later calcifies to form a spur. With proper warm-up and the use of appropriate athletic shoes, strain to the ligament can be reduced.

Your NorthPointe podiatrist may recommend anti-inflammatory medications, cortisone injections, corrective shoes, and/or orthotics (special shoe inserts). Surgery may be prescribed if spurring around the joint becomes severe or leads to recurrent pain from persistent corns.



The doctors of NorthPointe Foot & Ankle would like to share some advice for as you prepare to rake your lawn.

- **Warm-up your muscles** for at least 10 minutes by stretching before raking.
- **Keep a straight back** and turn your whole body while you rake to avoid twisting.
- **Use short strokes** instead of long ones to cut down the risk of over-extension injuries.
- **Vary your movements** so you can avoid excessive stress on one muscle group.
- **Bend at the knees** and squat rather than at the waist to pick up your heavy piles.
- **Make sure your rake is the proper height and weight** for you.
- **Wear gloves** or use a rake with a padded handle to prevent blisters.

Corns and Calluses

Corns and calluses are protective layers of compacted, dead skin cells. They are caused by repeated friction from skin rubbing against bony areas or against an irregularity in a shoe. Corns ordinarily form on the toes and calluses on the soles of the feet. The friction and pressure can burn or otherwise be painful and may be relieved by moleskin or padding on the affected areas.



Hard corns are usually located on the top of the toe or on the side of the small toe. Soft corns resemble open sores and develop between the toes as they rub against each other.

Improperly fitting shoes are a leading cause of corns. Toe deformities, such as hammertoe or claw toe, also can lead to corns.

Self-care for corns includes soaking feet regularly and using a pumice stone or callus file to reduce the size of the corn. Special over-the-counter, non-medicated, donut-shaped foam pads can be worn to help relieve the pressure and discomfort.

Never cut corns or calluses with any instrument, and never apply home remedies, except under a podiatrist's instructions. Speak with your NorthPointe doctor about options for your feet.

Autumn Foot Care

Feet can benefit from special attention as you move from lighter summer foot wear to heavier cool weather shoes. NorthPointe Foot & Ankle would like to share some tips about autumn foot care:

Moisturize: As cooler weather approaches, consider switching to an oil-based moisturizing lotion to make sure feet are staying properly moisturized. Dry feet can lead to cracking, pain, and infections. Moisturize feet in the evenings before bed, or in the morning after a shower.

Breathing room: Heavier shoes don't always allow feet to breathe. Give feet adequate time outside of heavy, enclosed shoes to avoid unwanted odors. Avoid wearing shoes made of synthetic materials whenever possible. Natural materials, including leather and suede, allow more air circulation.

Check Toes: Between the toes is the spot where infections and odor are most likely to develop during the autumn and winter. Whether it's from puddles, the elements, or unexpected spikes in temperature that cause your feet to sweat in closed-toe shoes, moisture that collects between the toes can easily lead to problems. Make sure to change shoes quickly if your feet get wet or sweaty, and don't wear your socks for more than one day in a row.

Nails: Give your toenails a break from nail polish. In the fall, toenails aren't constantly on display in sandals like they are in the summer. Regularly polishing the nails may cause nails to yellow, peel or dry up.

