

## Condition of the Month

### PINKY TOE PAIN

The pinky toe otherwise known as the “baby” toe or fifth toe can become painful for many reasons. It may be the smallest of the toes but the pain can be just as bad as pain in any other toe. By virtue of being closest to the outside of the shoe, the pinky toe does get bumped and bruised more often than the other toes.

All the toes start out being perfectly straight. Toes can become curled or lean inward or outward. The pinky toe is known to lean inward toward the fourth toe. This leaning is caused more by a tendon pulling it in this direction rather than tight or narrow shoes. The consequences of this turning in of the toe can be many things.

Here are some of the most common causes of pinky toe pain:

#### **Soft Corn on the inside of the toe**

Most of the time these aren't very large, however the pain can be quite severe. A soft corn starts from the pinky toe rubbing on the fourth toe. If the corn gets big enough it can become infected. Medicated corn pads aren't a good option for these. Since the corn won't go away on its own, having us treat it is your best option. Finding the cause and remedy that will last is our prime objective.

#### **Hard Corn on the top of the toe**

These corns are more common than soft corns. Just like any other corn or callus, they form from friction. The friction can be from tight shoes, narrow shoes, wide shoes or a bone problem. If the toe is bent down or curled inward, the shoe can put pressure on the bone causing the body to create extra skin. Again, medicated corn pads aren't a good option. Step one is to determine if a specific pair of shoes is the problem. If not, then step two is to have us determine the cause and best method to eliminate it permanently.

#### **“Bedpost fracture”**

If you've hit your pinky on the bed frame you know what we we're referring to. This injury hurts terribly. It's incredibly easy to break the toe doing this. If the toe

swells and bruises it likelier to be a fracture than a bruise. Avoiding bending the toe and buddy taping it to the next toe are best until having it examined by us. The biggest concern is a fracture involving the joint.

### **Pain around the nail**

Pinky toes can get a lot of shoe pressure. This can cause minor damage to the nail. An ingrown nail or thickened nail can develop. These can be quite painful. An injured nail can attract fungus causing discoloration. If you're experiencing pain around the nail avoid getting a pedicure until a diagnosis is made. Trying "bathroom surgery" also isn't a good option. Your best bet is to have us determine the diagnosis and easiest remedy.

The pinky toe may be small but the pain can be large. Let us know if you'd like us to help put an end to pain in this little devil.