

Metatarsalgia

Metatarsalgia is often caused by wearing shoes with thin soles and high heels. This puts extra pressure on the bones in the ball of the foot. Standing or walking on a hard surface for long periods also puts added pressure on the bones, causing pain. The pain can occur under any of the five metatarsal bones. Bent or twisted toes and bunions can make the problem worse as well as being overweight. Sometimes high arches or arthritis can also cause metatarsalgia.

Inside the Ball of Your Foot

The long bones in the middle of your foot are called the **metatarsal** bones. Each metatarsal bone ends in the ball of the foot. When you walk, these bones bear the weight of your body as your foot pushes off the ground. If there is more pressure on the end of one bone, it presses on the skin beneath it. This causes pain and inflammation in the ball of the foot (**metatarsalgia**). A **callus** (a hard growth of skin) may also form on the ball of the foot.

Symptoms

The most common symptom of metatarsalgia is pain in the ball of the foot. It may feel as if you have a stone in your shoe. The ball of the foot may also become red and inflamed, and a callus may form under the end of the metatarsal bone.

