

## RISKS OF SURGERY

Most patients who undergo bunion surgery have a significant reduction in pain and deformity. However, there are no guarantees and bunion surgery involves certain risks. These risks include infection, scarring, reoccurrence of the bunion, numbness, joint stiffness, and persistent swelling.

Other, less common complications, include over or under correction of the bunion, enlarged scar, blood clots, slow healing of bone cuts, loss of blood supply to the bone, difficulty walking, chronic pain or a reaction to medication.

It is your right and responsibility to share in all decisions about your care. You should discuss with your doctor the proposed treatment as well as any alternatives, and have all of your questions answered.



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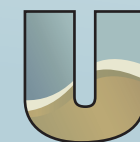
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## BUNION DEFORMITIES



**The Clinic**  
UINTAH BASIN HEALTHCARE

A bunion is a deformity in which a bump-like prominence develops at the base of the great toe. Bunions are caused by a misalignment of the big toe joint over time.

## SYMPTOMS

Pain from a bunion may be mild to severe. It is almost always worse in shoes, particularly shoes which are narrow or tight such as high heels. Pain often occurs directly over the bump but may also radiate in either direction. Skin and tissue around the bunion may become swollen or inflamed. Motion at the big toe joint at times becomes limited or painful.

Other toes may be affected by the bunion, particularly as the big toe moves and crowds the smaller toes. This can result in bent toes (hammer-toes), painful corns, toes overlapping each other and calluses on the bottom of the foot.

## CAUSES OF BUNIONS

Bunions are linked to inherited foot type. Bunions do tend to run in families. Tight or narrow shoes may aggravate a bunion, but do not necessarily cause a problem. People with low arches (flat feet) and certain forms of arthritis also are more prone to develop bunions.

## TREATMENT

Treatment of bunions varies depending on the symptoms and the severity of the deformity.

## NON-SURGICAL TREATMENT

The following measures can lessen the pain associated with bunions. However, these treatments cannot be expected to correct or realign a bunion.

**Shoes** which are wide through the toe area, a soft upper portion and no seam over the bunion are usually best.

**Pads** which are made to relieve shoe pressure on the bump are available over the counter.

**Medications** like ibuprofen are occasionally used to lessen pain and inflammation caused by a bunion.

**Ice and other physical therapy treatments** may temporarily relieve bunion pain.

**Orthoses** (special shoe inserts) may slow the progression of a bunion by changing the function of the foot.

## SURGICAL CORRECTION OF BUNIONS

Surgery may be necessary for a bunion when conservative treatments do not relieve pain, or when the deformity is significant and/or worsening. Surgery can also relieve discomfort when shoes cannot be worn comfortably and cause pain or irritation.

The procedure is performed in a hospital or surgical center with a skilled operating team and anesthesia personnel. More severe bunions require more extensive treatment. If the bone is cut, it is held in place with a pin or a screw. A cast or post-operative shoe is worn and crutches or a walker may be needed. Appropriate pain medications are given.

Care of the foot varies depending on the procedure performed, your particular needs, and your surgeon's preference. You will be given detailed and specific instruction that, if followed correctly, will help to provide the desired outcome.

