

# Our highly skilled podiatrists

are registered with the Health Care Professionals Council (HCPC) and members of the College of Podiatrists. The practice is accredited by the College of Podiatrists (CoP).

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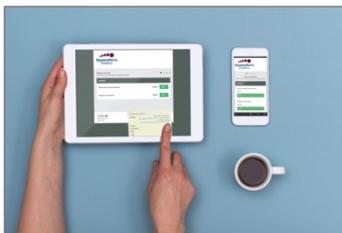
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## Professional and caring podiatrists

# Hallux Limitus



## Treatment Advice

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## What is hallux limitus?

Hallux limitus is a progressive condition in which the big toe joint becomes painful and stiff. It is most often due to osteoarthritis of the joint itself. The condition is more common in women.

There are various classifications of this condition but in simple terms it can be:

- mild
- moderate
- severe

## What can help?

Wearing shoes and insoles that provide support, have a roomy toe box and are less flexible (so that they limit any motion of the joint) can help to stop any excessive pressure on the big toe.

If it is developing, due to overuse, it is best to rest, which can help ease any pain or discomfort.

*Hallux limitus can cause hard skin to develop at the side of the big toe. If this causes discomfort, a podiatrist can painlessly remove it and give advice on how to manage it.*

## What will happen if I leave it untreated?

Your big toe is extremely important to motion, it provides the support and propulsive force you need to walk and run. Symptoms for this condition come on slowly and you may notice pain only when you are in motion or when you move the big toe. The pain and stiffness in the joint will continue to get worse. Continuous use will see that stiffness and pain increase. In some cases, a bump or spur can also form on top of the joint due to the arthritic nature of the condition, causing additional pain.

Early signs of limited motion are the beginning stage of degenerative arthritis. In the event of an injury or dysfunction in that toe, many other parts of your body from your knees to your back can suffer as a result.

## What causes it?

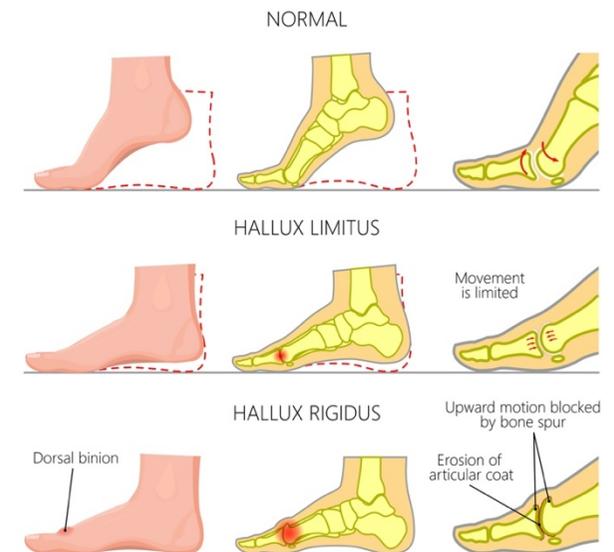
In some people, hallux limitus can run in the family and is a result of inheriting a genetic foot type that is prone to developing this condition.

In other cases, it is associated with overuse, this is especially true amongst people who are engaged in activities or jobs that increase the stress on the big toe, such as workers who often have to stoop or squat.

Hallux limitus can also result from an injury, such as stubbing your toe.

Or it may be caused by inflammatory diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis or gout.

Hallux limitus affects the upward movement of the big toe. Over time, the condition can worsen and lead to the condition *hallux rigidus* (no motion of the big toe at all).



## What are the treatments?

For mild cases, over-the-counter measures such as shoe modifications, prescription orthotics, physiotherapy and oral anti-inflammatory medications are most commonly used.

In severe cases, surgery may well be necessary. However, before surgery, a number of different treatments may well be attempted.