

Welcome to Queensferry Podiatry

Established in 1999, we have been committed to a professional and friendly podiatry service for over 25 years.

Covering everything from nail problems, hard skin and corns to comprehensive diabetic foot care and check-ups, biomechanical assessments, orthotic fitting and nail surgery.

Kirsty and her associates are degree trained Podiatrists and are registered with the Health Care Professionals Council (HCPC) and members of the Royal College of Podiatrists.

Individual Advice:



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Treatment Options

Ingrowing Toenail

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The quicker you deal with it, the less painful the treatment.

What is an Ingrowing Toenail?

An ingrowing toenail is where a piece of nail pierces the flesh of the toe. It can feel as if you have a splinter, and be extremely painful and inflamed or infected. In more severe cases, it can cause pus and bleeding. Ingrowing toenails most commonly affect the big toenail, but can affect the other toes too.

A nail that is curling (involuting) into the flesh, but isn't actually piercing the skin, isn't an ingrowing toenail but can feel very painful and can also appear red and inflamed.

Symptoms

- tenderness in the skin around the nail
- swelling around the skin and nail
- hard skin near the nail
- the skin may be bleeding
- a curved painful toenail
- redness in the skin next to the nail
- the toe may be hot
- pus or infection may be present near the toenail

What causes it?

- There are many genetic factors that can make you prone to ingrowing toenails, including your posture (the way you stand), your gait (the way you walk) and any foot deformity such as a bunion, hammer toes or excessive pronation of the feet (when your foot rolls inward excessively). Your nails may also have a natural tendency to splay or curl out instead of growing straight, encouraging your nail to grow outwards or inwards into the flesh.
- One of the most common causes is not cutting your toenails properly, such as cutting nails too low in order to relieve the pressure and discomfort of an involuted nail.
- Tight footwear, hosiery and socks can also push your toe flesh onto the nail so that it pierces the skin. If you sweat excessively or don't rotate your footwear, the skin becomes moist and weak and is easily penetrated by the nail. If you have brittle nails with sharp edges or are in the habit of breaking off bits of nail that are sticking out, you are also more likely to get an ingrowing toenail.
- Less common is a fungal infection or in some cases particular types of medication, for example isotretinoin.

How Can I Prevent it?

Cut your nails straight across and don't cut too low at the edge or down the side. The corner of the nail should be visible above the skin. Avoid moist, soggy feet by rotating your footwear so each pair has a chance to dry out thoroughly. Keep your feet clean and dry and in the summer wear open-toed sandals to let air get to your toes as much as possible.

Treatment Options

- For the most basic painful and irritable ingrowing toenail, the offending spike of nail will be removed and the toe covered with an antiseptic dressing
- For toes too painful to touch, a local anaesthetic will be injected before removing the offending portion of nail
- For involuted nails, part of the nail that is curling into the flesh is removed and then the edges of the nail are filed to a smooth surface
- For recurring ingrowing a minor surgical procedure to remove all or part of a nail under local analgesia can be performed. Following the removal, the nail bed is treated with a chemical to stop the nail from growing back again.

If you have diabetes, taking steroids or on anti-coagulants, don't attempt to cut your nails or remove an ingrowing spikes of nail yourself.