

# 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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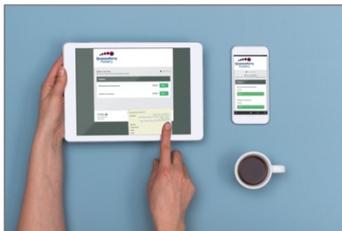
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Online booking on our Facebook page or website:

[www.queensferrypodiatry.com](http://www.queensferrypodiatry.com)



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## Professional and caring podiatrists

## Ingrown Toenail



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### Guidance for patients



## What is an Ingrown Toenail?

An ingrown toenail occurs when the edges or corners of your nail grow into the skin on the sides of the nail. Your big toe is most likely to get an ingrown toenail.

An ingrown toenail can cause complications that might require medical treatment. Your risk of complication is higher if you have diabetes or other conditions that cause poor circulation.

## What causes an Ingrown Toenail?

- Ill-fitting shoes such as tight shoes, high heels and pointed-toe shoes cause the toes to be compressed together so that the nail curls into the skin and cannot grow normally.
- Improper trimming of toenails can cause the nail edge or corner to dig into the skin.
- Toenail injury, including stubbing your toe, dropping something heavy on your foot, or kicking a heavy object.
- Abnormal nail shape such as curved nails (also called involuted nails).
- Activities in which you repeatedly kick an object or put pressure on your feet for long periods of time (ballet, football, kickboxing, football).

## 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.

*If you have diabetes or another condition that causes poor circulation to your feet, you are at greater risk of getting more severe complications and should seek immediate treatment at the first signs of an ingrown toenail.*

## How to Prevent an Ingrown Toenail?

Adhering to the following simple rules can easily prevent ingrown toenails:

- Clip toenails straight across – do not cut them too short and do not round off the edges.
- File your toenails.
- You can temporarily relieve discomfort by soaking your foot in a solution of lukewarm water and salt.
- Wear well-fitting shoes.

## What is the treatment?

Conservative cutting of the nail completed regularly by a podiatrist. For nails which are only slightly ingrown, podiatrists can gently lift the ingrowing nail edge to separate it from the underlying skin, thus relieving the pain. They then place cotton wool, under the nail to keep it away from the skin, so that it can grow above the skin edge.

For recurring ingrown toenails podiatrists can remove part of the nail or the whole nail under local anaesthetic. Please see our nail surgery leaflet for more information on this procedure.