



FOOT NOTES

From the office of Carlisle Foot & Ankle Specialists



Morton's Neuroma

Morton's neuroma is an inflammation of an interdigital nerve in the ball of the foot. It is named after Dr. T. J. Morton, from Philadelphia, but it was first described by the Queen of England's Chiropodist, Louis Durlacher, in 1845. Literally, a neuroma means a tumor but in this case it is only a thickening of the nerve tissue.

Classically, a symptomatic neuroma has a "burning" sensation in the ball of the foot that may extend into the digits. The third interspace is the most common, followed by the second interspace. A common description from a patient is that they feel like the bottom of their sock is wrinkled, however, when they take off their shoe to straighten the sock, it is totally smooth. An x-ray will be normal but it may be identified in the office with diagnostic ultrasound. Often times, MRI's are normal. A splaying of the digits ("Texas Longhorn sign") may be present.

Treatments include NSAIDS, cortisone injections, alcohol injections, OTC or custom insoles, padding of the ball of the foot. The majority of neuromas respond to conservative therapy. In recalcitrant cases, surgery is an option. Traditionally, if surgery is indicated an excision of the neuroma was the standard. Recent evidence based medicine, however, dictates that we should treat a surgical neuroma as a nerve entrapment and not remove the nerve but only perform a nerve release.



For more information or to refer your Morton's Neuroma patient for an appointment feel free to contact our office:

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