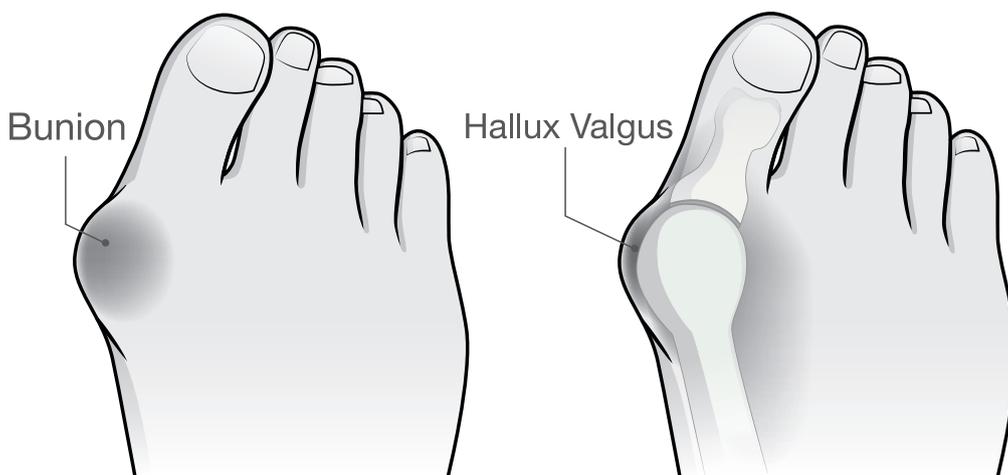


# Information about Hallux Valgus (Bunions)

The aim of this leaflet is to give you some understanding of the problems you have with your big toe and to provide some advice on how to manage this. It should be used along with information you may be given by your healthcare professional.

## What is Hallux Valgus (commonly known as a bunion)?



A bunion is a deformity of the base joint of the big toe. The joint at the base of the toe develops a sideways angle. The deformity is called Hallux Valgus. Due to this deformity the big toe can rotate and move more towards the smaller toes. The skin over the bunion can rub on the inside of your shoes. This may cause thickening and inflammation of the skin and tissues over the big toe joint. The thickened skin may become inflamed, swollen and painful. Sometimes a fluid filled sac – called a bursa – can develop over the joint.

## What are the symptoms?

- Pain and stiffness of the big toe joint
- Swelling of the big toe joint
- Difficulty walking
- The foot may become so wide that it can be difficult to find wide enough shoes

## Possible causes of a bunion?

Even though this is a very common problem, the reasons for hallux valgus developing in an individual case are hard to define, however heredity factors and footwear are thought to play a part among other things.

## What tests may be done?

In the majority of cases, you do not need an x ray or any other tests to confirm what is wrong, unless your problem is severe enough that we may consider surgery. The main way to diagnose this problem is through what you tell us and examining your foot.

## **What can you do to help?**

- Aim for a healthy body weight.
- Follow the advice from your community pharmacist or other healthcare professional about taking your medication. It is important to take medication regularly.
- One of the most important things you can do to help is to wear the right footwear. You should try to wear wide shoes with a low heel that fit you comfortably. Shoes with laces or an adjustable strap are best as they can be adjusted to the width of your foot.
- Do not wear high heeled, pointed or tight shoes as this will make your pain worse.

## **What else can be done?**

If your pain does not start improving after a period of 3 months of following the advice above, please phone 0141 347 8909 to see a healthcare professional who can assess your foot and potentially recommend further treatment or onward referral. If other treatments do not help and your bunion is very painful we may consider you for surgery. This will only be decided after consultation with orthopaedics to make sure that you are aware of the risks and benefits.