



## condition

# Bunions, Blisters, Corns & Calluses

## class

### Foot Disorders

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## description

A bunion is where the big toe curves outwards and the joint is swollen and tender. Blisters are a bubble-like swelling on the skin filled with a watery fluid.

Corns develop on the feet and can be soft or hard. Hard corns are small areas of hard skin, usually the size of a small pea. Soft corns are rubbery and white and usually develop between the toes. A callus is a larger area of thickened skin on the feet.

## symptoms

Bunions, blisters, corns and calluses can all be painful. If you have a bunion you might also find that walking is difficult because of the swelling.

## causes

Some people are more likely to develop bunions than others, either because of a family history of the complaint or because of the way they walk. Wearing ill-fitting shoes can make bunions worse.

Any type of friction or rubbing of the skin can cause blisters. Badly fitting shoes or shoes worn without socks are often the reason a blister develops.

Corns and calluses form on the areas of the foot where there is pressure from the weight of the body or a tight fitting shoe. When the pressure becomes excessive, some areas of the skin thicken as a protective response. Corns occur over bony parts of the foot like joints. A callus can appear anywhere the skin rubs against a bone or shoe.

## treatment

Once a bunion has developed, you can stop further damage by wearing shoes with a straight inside edge and rounded toe. If you think you have a bunion you should see a state registered chiropodist who may suggest you wear protective pads or insoles to ease the pressure. In severe cases, you may be referred for surgery to realign the big toe.

Try not to burst your blister. Small blisters will usually heal by themselves. You can apply a dressing to the blister to stop any further rubbing.

You should not try to cut corns and calluses yourself. You can use a pumice stone to remove thickened skin gradually while you are in the bath and can relieve pressure using foam padding to cushion the affected area. But don't try and remove hard skin over a bony area or joint. If the corn or callus is very painful you should see a state registered chiropodist who can remove the hard skin. Chiropodists and podiatrists do not advise over-the-counter treatments for corns, such as corn plasters or paints, because they can burn the healthy tissue around a corn. They recommend that commercially available products should only be used following professional advice.

## when to consult a doctor

If you are diabetic and have any sort of foot problem, you should always seek medical advice. If you have a blister that has burst and become red and inflamed it could be infected and you should see your doctor.

## healthy tips

- + Wash your feet daily with warm soapy water and dry thoroughly, especially between the toes
- + Use a moisturiser if you have dry skin
- + Use a foot powder