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I have developed a bunion – what causes bunions and what can I do to relieve some of the pain?

Profoot's Foot Doctor, William Hutchings of the Diss Podiatry and Chiropody Clinic, Norfolk says:

Bunions are one of the most common foot problems experienced and cause a great deal of pain and inconvenience for the sufferer. A bunion is a prominent bump (which is actually bone) on the inside of the foot around the big toe joint which can become inflamed, swollen and sore, making walking very uncomfortable. Bunions can also cause the big toe to be squashed against the smaller toes, causing the big toe to rest under or over the second toe.

Bunions occur more frequently in women, which comes as no surprise if you look at the crazy fashion trends in women's footwear. By squeezing feet into tight, narrow stilettos our feet will begin to take the shape of the shoe – which leads to the formation of a bunion.

If joints become swollen, red or tender you should consult your podiatrist, as these symptoms may be indicating not only bunions, but also gout, arthritis or an infection. Here are some tips to help avoid future problems and help relieve the associated pain.

- Avoid wearing shoes or boots which are tapered in the toe area and squeeze the toes together
- Get your feet measured to ensure you are wearing the correct shoe size
- Soaking feet in water will provide temporary relief
- For painful bunions, wear proper fitting shoes with a wide toe area Avoid wearing tight fitting hosiery and socks
- Any lump is likely to catch so watch out for corns, blisters, ulcers, abscess and/or chilblains
- Try Profoot's Soft Gel Toe Spreader which relieves bunion and toe pain by separating and properly aligning big and second toes. The mineral oil enriched gel also softens and moisturises the area, helping to reduce the build up of hard skin