

FACT SHEET FOURTEEN: Calluses

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I get a very painful burning sensation on the sole of my foot and am also prone to hard skin. What can be done?

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

It sounds to me as though you have a callus on the ball of your foot - a large area of hard dead skin with no central core, which is caused by friction and pressure from shoes and the ground surface.

When we walk or stand, in order to withstand the pressure, our body weight is carried first on the heel and then the ball of the foot, where the skin is thicker. If the pressure becomes extreme the skin will thicken as a protective response - causing calluses. This can happen anywhere on the foot where the skin is being rubbed, by such things as uncomfortable or ill-fitting shoes.

'Walking on stones' is another unpleasant feeling associated with calluses. This is generally associated with an underlying problem, such as bone deformity or a particular style of walking, and in this case I would always recommend visiting a chiropodist.

What can you do?

- You can control the hard skin by regularly rubbing it with a pumice stone when in the bath. It also helps to apply moisturiser daily.
- Cushioning can also help relieve discomfort and pain in the ball of the foot – try Profoot's Toe Beds – a revolutionary toe and ball of foot cushion, which gently aligns toes promoting proper toe placement. They can also help to prevent fatigue and the unpleasant feeling of walking on stones.