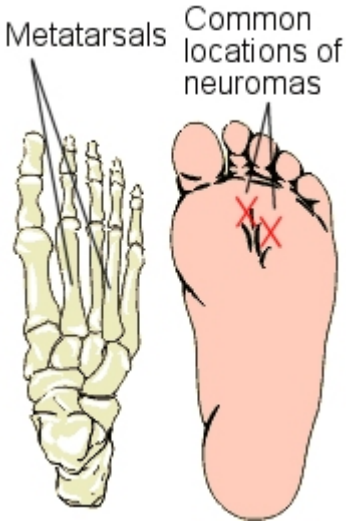
Morton's Neuroma (Interdigital Nerve Pain)



Neuralgia (nerve pain) or *neuroma* (*benign* [non-cancerous] nerve tumor) may develop on any interdigital nerve. The *interdigital nerves* (nerves between digits) of the foot travel beneath and between the *metatarsals* (long bones of the fore foot) and pass the nerve endings to the toes. The third interdigital is a common place for a small neuroma to form called Morton's neuroma. Another nerve to be affected commonly is the fourth interdigital nerve. This would be in approximately in the area of the base or ball under the bottom of your fourth toe. This condition occurs more commonly in women and is usually on one side. It is usually first noticed by pain *radiating* (spreading) to the ball of the foot or to the toes.

CAUSE

The cause of interdigital neuralgia may be from low grade repetitive *trauma* (damage caused by an accident) as in activities causing a repeated pounding of the foot (running, jumping etc.). It is also caused by improper footwear or recent loss of the fatty padding on the bottom of the foot.

TREATMENT

The condition often *resolves* (goes away) simply with decreasing activity if that is thought to be the cause. Proper shoes are beneficial. *Orthotics* (special foot support aids) such as a metatarsal bar are often beneficial. This condition usually responds to conservative therapy, however if surgery is necessary it usually brings complete relief.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Apply ice to the area of soreness for 15 to 20 minutes four times per day while awake for the first 2 days. Put ice in a plastic bag and place a towel between the bag of ice and your skin.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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