



Hallux Rigidus

Hallux rigidus also called *hallux limitus* is a condition caused by changes to the cartilage in the joint at the base of the first great toe. The changes typically occur over a long time, though symptoms can worsen suddenly. Over time the motion in the joint is lost and causes pain, especially when the toe comes up (such as when pushing off the foot at the end of your step, or when in a push-up position). Hallux rigidus is the most common site of arthritis in the foot and can cause pain in both men and women.

Symptoms:

- Pain in the joint with increased activity
- Stiffness
- A bump on the top of the foot that can limit motion
- Swelling or redness in the area of irritation
- Difficulty with shoe wear

Causes:

- Past trauma to the toe
- Prior fractures
- Repetitive trauma
- Sports injuries
- Genetic predisposition toward arthritis
- Differences in anatomy that places greater stress on the big toe

Treatments:

- **Non-operative**
 - Reduce inflammation and irritation: NSAIDS (oral/topical), steroid injections
 - Limit motion: Rigid inserts, stiff soled shoes, rocker bottom shoes.
 - Avoid pressure over the bump: wide toe box, extra-depth shoes, and sandals.
- **Operative**
 - Discuss with Dr. Feinblatt what your best surgical option would be based on your history, clinical exam, x-rays, and level of physical demand. Surgical options include: microfracture, OATS, cheilectomy, decompressive osteotomy, soft tissue interposition joint replacement, metallic joint replacement, and fusion.
 - Surgical procedures are outpatient and patients can typically walk on the foot the same day.

