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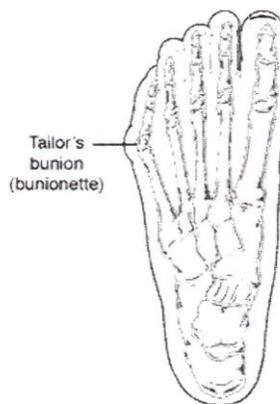
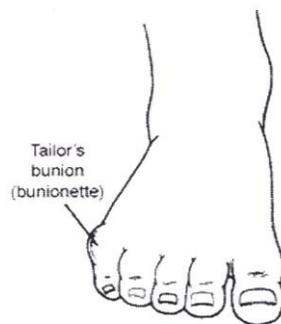
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Tailor's Bunion

Tailor's bunion, also called a bunionette, is an enlargement of the fifth metatarsal bone at the base of the little toe. The metatarsals are the five long bones of the foot. The enlargement that characterizes a tailor's bunion occurs at the metatarsal "head," located at the far end of the bone where it meets the toe. Tailor's bunions are not as common as bunions, which occur on the inside of the foot, but both are similar in symptoms and causes.



Causes of a Tailor's Bunion

Often a tailor's bunion is caused by an inherited faulty mechanical structure of the foot. In these cases, changes occur in the foot's bony framework that result in the development of an enlargement. The fifth metatarsal bone starts to protrude outward, while the little toe moves inward. This shift creates a bump on the outside of the foot that becomes irritated whenever a shoe presses against it.

Sometimes a tailor's bunion is actually a bony spur (an outgrowth of bone) on the side of the fifth metatarsal head. Heredity is the main reason that these spurs develop.

Treatment: Non-surgical Options

Shoe modifications. Wearing the right kind of shoes is critical. Choose shoes that have a wide toe box, and avoid those with pointed toes or high heels.

Oral medications. Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as ibuprofen, may help relieve the pain and inflammation.

Injection therapy. Injections of corticosteroid are commonly used to treat the inflamed tissue around the joint.

Padding. Bunionette pads placed over the area may help reduce pain. These pads are available from your foot and ankle surgeon or at a drug store.

Icing. An ice pack may be applied to reduce pain and inflammation. Wrap the pack in a thin towel rather than placing ice directly on your skin.

When is Surgery Needed?

Surgery is often considered when pain continues despite the above approaches. Surgery is highly successful in the treatment of tailor's bunions.

