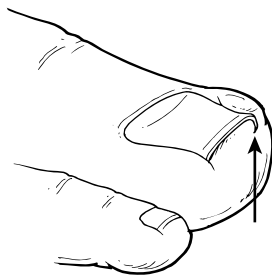
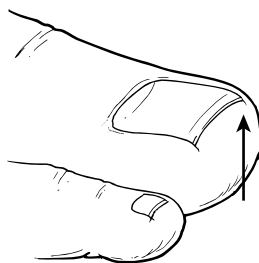


What Is an Ingrown Toenail?

When a toenail is ingrown, the nail is curved downward and grows into the skin, usually at the nail borders (the sides of the nail). This “digging in” of the nail irritates the skin, often creating pain, redness, swelling, and warmth in the toe.



Ingrown nail



Normal nail

If an ingrown nail causes a break in the skin, bacteria may enter and cause an infection in the area, which is often marked by drainage and a foul odor. However, even if your toe isn't painful, red, swollen, or warm, a nail that curves downward into the skin can progress to an infection.

What Causes an Ingrown Toenail?

Ingrown toenails can develop for various reasons. In many people, the tendency to have this common disorder is inherited. In other cases, an ingrown toenail is the result of trauma, such as stubbing your toe, having an object fall on your toe, or engaging in activities that involve repeated pressure on the toes, such as kicking or running.

The most common cause of ingrown toenails is improper trimming. Cutting your nails too short encourages the skin next to the nail to fold over the nail. Another cause of ingrown toenails is wearing shoes that are tight or short.

Certain nail conditions are often associated with ingrown toenails. For example, if you have had a toenail fungal infection or if you have lost a nail through trauma, you are at greater risk for developing an ingrown toenail.

Treatment

Sometimes initial treatment for ingrown toenails can be safely performed at home. However, home treatment is strongly discouraged if you suspect you have an infection, or if you have a medical condition that puts your feet at high risk—for example, diabetes, nerve damage in the foot, or poor circulation.

Home care:

If you don't have an infection or any of the above conditions, you can soak your foot in room-temperature water (add Epsom's salt if you wish), and gently massage the side of the nail fold to help reduce the inflammation.

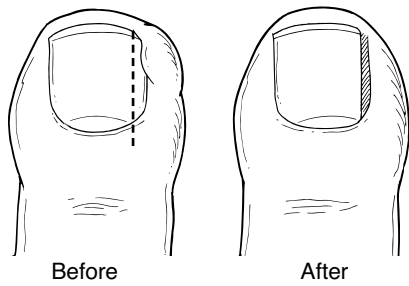
Avoid attempting “bathroom surgery.” Repeated cutting of the nail can cause the condition to worsen over time. If your symptoms fail to improve, it's time to see a foot and ankle surgeon.

Physician care:

The foot and ankle surgeon will examine your toe and select the treatment best suited for you.

Treatment may include:

- **Oral antibiotics.** If an infection is present, an oral antibiotic may be prescribed.
- **Surgery.** A simple procedure, often performed in the office, is commonly needed to ease the pain and remove the offending nail. Surgery may involve numbing the toe and removing a corner of the nail, a larger portion of the nail, or the entire nail.
- **Permanent removal.** Various techniques may be used to destroy or remove the nail root. This treatment prevents the recurrence of an ingrown toenail. Your surgeon will determine the most appropriate procedure for you.



line, and don't cut them too short. You should be able to get your fingernail under the sides and end of the nail.

- **Avoid poorly-fitting shoes.** Don't wear shoes that are short or tight

in the toe box. Also avoid shoes that are loose, because they too cause pressure on the toes, especially when you run or walk briskly. ▲

Following nail surgery, a light bandage will be applied. Most people experience very little pain after surgery and may resume normal activity the next day. If your surgeon has prescribed an oral antibiotic, be sure to take all the medication, even if your symptoms have improved.

Preventing Ingrown Toenails

Many cases of ingrown toenails may be prevented by following these two important tips:

- **Trim your nails properly.** Cut your toenails in a fairly straight

The Truth About Home Treatment

Myths	Truths
Cutting a notch (a "V") in the nail will reduce the tendency for the nail to curve downward.	Cutting a "V" does not affect the growth of the toenail. New nail growth will continue to curve downward.
Repeated trimming of the nail borders is a good way to treat ingrown toenails.	Repeated nail trimming fails to correct future nail growth and can make the condition worse.
Cotton placed under the nail will relieve the pain.	Cotton placed under the nail can be harmful. It can easily harbor bacteria and encourage infection.
You can buy effective ingrown toenail treatments at the drug store.	Over-the-counter topical medications may mask the pain, but they fail to address the underlying problem.



Melissa J. Lockwood, D.P.M.

Melissa J. Lockwood, D.P.M. – As founder of Heartland Foot and Ankle Associates, P.C., Dr. Melissa J. Lockwood happily returns to central Illinois after seven years in Cleveland, Ohio. She is a graduate of Providence Catholic High School in New Lenox, Illinois. Dr. Lockwood completed her undergraduate degree from the University of Illinois (Urbana/Champaign) in 2001 with a Bachelor of Science in Biology and a minor degree in Chemistry. Dr. Lockwood has a great interest in archaeology and also received a minor degree in Anthropology from the U of I in 2001.

Dr. Lockwood went on to the Ohio College of Podiatric Medicine and matriculated with her Podiatric Medical Degree in 2005. While at OCPM, Dr. Lockwood served as both a delegate to the student branch of the APMA

as well as President of the Student Government organization (OPMSA). Dr. Lockwood was the recipient of several awards while attending OCPM, including the Ohio Podiatric Medical Association Dr. James Conforti Community Relations Award and the OCPM Mildred Kaufman Memorial Award for Proficiency in Orthopedics and Biomechanics.

Dr. Lockwood arrives in Bloomington following a three year residency in Cleveland, Ohio. Dr. Lockwood completed a 36 month Podiatric Medical and Surgical Residency Program based out of the University Hospital System/Richmond Heights Medical Center. Dr. Lockwood has extensive training in both forefoot (bunions, hammertoes, neuromas) elective surgical procedures as well as rearfoot reconstruction. She has a special interest in the treatment of chronic wounds as well as diabetic palliative care. Dr. Lockwood enjoys working with patients one on one in a clinical setting and chatting about her favorite sports teams!

Dr. Lockwood and her husband Scott are pleased to be back in their home state and rooting on the Illini, Redbirds, Chicago Bears, and White Sox! Scott is a 2000 Illinois State University Alumni with a BS degree in Accountancy. He is a CPA working in Bloomington.

EDUCATION

University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, BS Biology (01)
Professional: Ohio College of Podiatric Medicine, (05)
Residency: University Hospital Richmond Medical Center (05-June 08)

PROFESSIONAL ACCREDITATION

NBPME Part I (03) NBPME Boards Part II & Part III - PM Lexus (05)
State of Illinois Licensure (08)

HONORS AND AWARDS

Illinois State Scholar (1997)
OCPM Academic Scholarship (01) OCPM Dean's List (04)
OPMA Dr. James Conforti Community Relations Award (05)
OCPM Mildred Kaufman Memorial Award for Proficiency in Orthopedics and Biomechanics (05)
University Hospitals Richmond Medical Center Outstanding Podiatric Resident (08)

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

President, Ohio Podiatric Medical Student's Association (02-04)
Delegate, American Podiatric Medical Students Association (02-04)
Chairman, President's Committee, American Podiatric Medical Student's Association Feb. 2004
Member - OCPM Board of Trustees (02-04)
APMA/IPMA, AAAPP, AAWP member at large

RESEARCH/PUBLICATIONS

Sesamoid Pathology, coauthored with
Dr. Joseph Favazzo, D.P.M., December 2005. Compilation of forefoot pathology edited by Vincent J. Hetherington, D.P.M.



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American College of
Foot and Ankle Surgeons

This information has been prepared by the Consumer Education Committee of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons, a professional society of 5800 foot and ankle surgeons. Members of the College are Doctors of Podiatric Medicine who have received additional training through surgical residency programs.

The mission of the College is to promote superior care of foot and ankle surgical patients through education, research and the promotion of the highest professional standards.

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