



York and Scarborough
Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Morton's Neuroma

Information for patients, relatives and carers

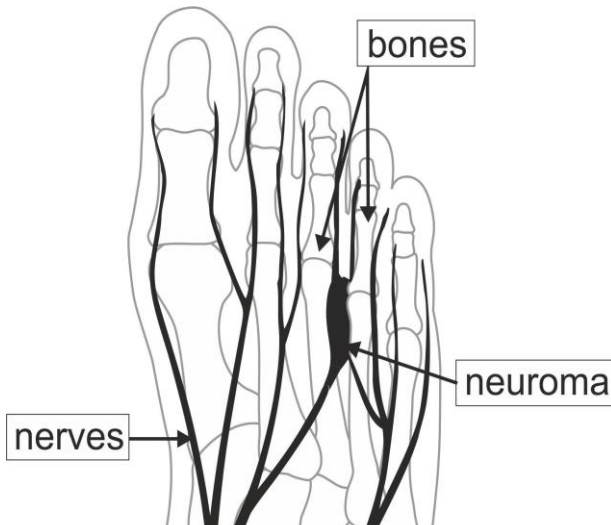
① For more information, please see contact details on
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What is Morton's Neuroma?

Morton's neuroma is a condition affecting one of the nerves near the base of the toes. This most commonly affects the nerve between the third and fourth metatarsal bones. It can also affect the nerve between the second and third metatarsals. The nerve becomes thickened which can lead to compression and cause pain, this can be in the ball of the foot, in the toes or both. You may also experience burning, numbness or tingling symptoms.

The symptoms are usually worse with activity and certain footwear such as narrow or high-heeled shoes. Some people complain they feel like they are walking on a stone or marble. The pain can be relieved by removing your shoe and massaging the area. The affected toes can often appear to be spread apart.



What causes Morton's Neuroma?

There are many theories as to the cause of nerve irritation. It is thought repeated compression causing irritation is the most likely.

Ill-fitting and narrow footwear can increase the compression.

What are the treatments for Morton's Neuroma?

Footwear and insoles

Footwear that provides adequate width and support for your foot is very important and is the first and most important treatment. Narrow, high-heeled, and thin-soled footwear should be avoided.

Should this fail to provide adequate relief, then symptoms can often be eased through the use of insoles. These can be purchased over the counter or issued by a podiatrist.

A steroid injection into the affected area can also be considered if symptoms persist.

Medication

Pain relief such as paracetamol or ibuprofen may ease any pain and should be discussed with your pharmacist or doctor.

Surgery

The reason for surgery is to reduce pain. An operation may be advised if:

- If you experience painful symptoms.
- If appropriate footwear, provision of insoles and steroid injection do not ease symptoms.

What does surgery involve?

The surgery is usually performed as a day case under a general or spinal anaesthetic.

A small cut (incision) is made on the top or bottom of your foot between the affected toes. The thickened area of nerve is removed, and more space made around the nerve. Removal of the nerve will lead to permanent numbness of the skin between the affected toes.

What about recovery after surgery?

- After your operation, you will usually be allowed home later that day.
- Your foot will be covered in a bandage and a surgical shoe for one to two weeks.
- You may begin walking straight away, but only in the surgical shoe.
- We advise you to elevate your foot for regular periods throughout the day for several weeks after surgery.
- You may experience some numbness over a 12-24 hour period.
- You may notice some bleeding through the bandage which is not uncommon.
- Do not remove the surgical shoe, except at night. You must put it back on when you get out of bed.
- Do not remove your bandage.
- Keep your bandage dry.

What can I expect after surgery?

You will be reviewed in the outpatient clinic or by your practice nurse at two weeks to review your wound. If we are satisfied with your progress, you may remove your surgical shoe. You may return to a regular shoe but should avoid heeled footwear for a further two months.

You will be reviewed in the outpatient clinic at approximately six weeks.

Once recovered, you will be able to wear most, but possibly not all types of footwear.

You may find some discomfort and swelling persists for many months. Full recovery can take up to one year following your surgery.

When will I be able to drive again?

You will be unable to drive for a period of two weeks after surgery or until you are no longer using the surgical shoe.

If you are advised to continue using your surgical shoe after your two-week review, the only exception when you may be allowed to drive is if you have an **automatic vehicle** and only **left foot** surgery.

When will I be able to return to work?

Generally, two to four weeks is required off work. This does depend on your occupation. If you have a particularly manual job, or one which involves prolonged standing or long shift work it is possible this period will be longer.

We will provide you with a fit note for the first two weeks. If necessary, this may be extended at your review appointment in the outpatient department.

What should I do if I have a problem after going home?

If you experience severe pain, excessive swelling or bleeding please contact:

Within the **first 24 hours** after you leave hospital, contact the Day Unit on 01904 72 60 10 between 8am and 6pm. Outside of these hours please contact the Extended Stay Area on 01904 72 12 65.

After 24 hours, please contact your own GP.

Alternatively during a weekend or if you are unable to seek other appropriate advice, please contact Ward 29 on 01904 72 60 29.

This leaflet is intended as a guide. Some of the details and instructions may vary due to your individual surgery or special instructions from your surgeon.

Further information regarding foot and ankle surgery can be found in the booklet "Foot and Ankle Surgery".

Tell us what you think of this leaflet

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact:

[enter contact details here including address and telephone and email if possible.]

Teaching, training and research

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net.

An answer phone is available out of hours.

Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you would like this information in a different format, including braille or easy read, or translated into a different language, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department providing your care.

Patient Information Leaflets can be accessed via the Trust's Patient Information Leaflet website:

www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/

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