

What is it?

Metatarsalgia is a general term used to refer to any painful foot condition affecting the metatarsal region of the foot. Traditionally the term tends to refer to pain under the ball of the foot or "metatarsal heads". However there are a range of specific conditions that exist under the umbrella term of "metatarsalgia".

Symptoms:

- Can be localised i.e. under one or two metatarsal heads or can be general and felt under all the metatarsal heads
- Pain in the ball of the foot which has been described as being like 'walking on pebbles'
- Can be worse by standing, walking or running
- May affect both feet

Common Causes?

- Overuse
- Wearing high heeled shoes
- Having a stiff ankle/tight Achilles tendon
- Morton's Neuroma
- Claw foot (pes cavus)
- Hammertoe or claw toe deformity
- Bunion
- Stress fracture
- Arthritis

Treatment

- Choosing correct footwear
- Orthotics with a metatarsal pad and cushioning to offload pressure points under the ball of the foot
- Steroid injections are used to reduce inflammation arising from either a joint or soft tissue
- If your metatarsalgia is proving resistant to settling down with conservative measures e.g. pain in the ball of the foot due to a misshapen toe "hammertoe", neuroma - then surgery may be an option

For further information on your foot health or to discuss treatment options with a podiatrist, please contact your local ModPod Podiatry clinic.