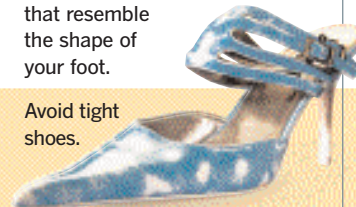
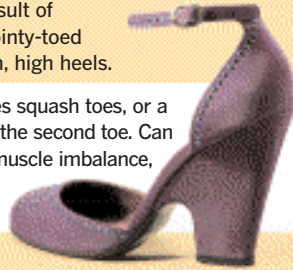


	WHAT	WHY	HOW TO PREVENT	HOW TO TREAT
INGROWING TOENAILS	The toenail digs into the flesh of the toe around it, possibly causing infection.	Cutting toenails incorrectly or wearing shoes that are too small can cause this, but some people simply have a predisposition to it.	Cut toenails across in a straight line (visit www.feetforlife.org for guidance).	If toes are red, inflamed and painful, see a chiropodist/podiatrist/your GP. Otherwise, cut nails in a straight line, soak feet in a salt bath and apply antiseptic.
BUNIONS	The big toe's joint becomes angled to the outside of the foot, causing the bone to stick out.	Bunions can be a hereditary condition or the result of wearing tight or pointy-toed shoes or, in women, high heels.	Select shoes that conform to the shape of your foot, with a roomy toe box and low heel height.	The only cure for bunions is surgery—the most successful procedure is scarf metatarsal osteotomy. Otherwise, get shoes that fit well or try protective bunion cushions (www.scholl-footcare.co.uk).
HAMMER TOES	Toes scrunch into a permanent clawlike position.	Pointy or tight shoes squash toes, or a bunion pushes into the second toe. Can also be caused by muscle imbalance, heredity or trauma to the foot.	Look for square or round toe boxes that are wide and shoes that resemble the shape of your foot.	Only surgery can reshape toes if the condition becomes very painful, but wearing shoes with enough room for the bent toe, or getting foot pads to relieve pressure, or toe props to protect toes, reduces pain (www.simplyfeet.co.uk).
MORTON'S NEUROMA	An inflammation of a nerve, usually between the third and fourth toe, which causes pain or numbness.	Neuromas can be caused by bones rubbing up against the nerves due to shoes that squeeze the foot or a deformity in bone structure.	Avoid tight shoes.	Severe cases may call for surgery. Otherwise, your GP may give you cortisone injections. You can also try custom-made orthotics or foot-support pads or insoles (www.drfoot.co.uk , www.footcareonline.co.uk).
FALLEN ARCHES	Just what it sounds like; the arches of your feet flatten out.	Age, genetics, joint disease such as rheumatoid arthritis and excessive body weight are all culprits.	Keep weight at optimal level and wear supportive shoes. Don't stand barefoot for long periods.	Surgery for extreme cases, otherwise special insoles (over the counter or custom-made from a podiatrist) to put your body in alignment and alleviate pain.
PLANTAR FASCIITIS	Inflammation of the tissue along the arch, from the heel to the ball of the foot, that leads to heel pain.	Causes include wearing shoes that offer little support, prolonged, repetitive activity, sports-related injury or trauma, weight gain and tightness of leg muscles.	Warm up and stretch before exercising and choose shoes with cushioned heels and soles, such as shock-absorbing trainers.	Stretching exercises and orthotic insoles will help. Heel pads, to keep pressure off the painful area, physiotherapy with ultrasound or acupuncture can help. Rest heel on a bag of frozen peas wrapped in a towel to relieve pain. Cortisone injections, as a last resort (www.simplyfeet.co.uk).
VERRUCAS	Irritating warts on the bottom of your feet.	These develop when a virus enters abrasions on the foot.	Wear flip-flops instead of walking barefoot at the swimming pool or gym.	Over-the-counter treatments are effective. Look for products containing salicylic acid. If the verruca becomes painful, or the surrounding skin appears red, see your GP. Stubborn verrucas can be frozen off or removed by laser or electro-surgery. Ask your GP or podiatrist.
HEEL BUMP	Also known as Haglund's deformity, this is a bony deformity on the back of the heel, which can lead to bursitis if left untreated.	The back of stiff shoes places pressure on the heel bone.	Avoid shoes with stiff backs, alternate them with other shoes or use heel pads to decrease pressure and lift the heel.	Reduce swelling with anti-inflammatory gels (arnica and witch hazel are good natural anti-inflammatories); ice the back of the heel. Choose shoes (perhaps backless) that don't rub, avoiding activities that put strain on the area (www.footcareonline.co.uk).
ACHILLES TENDONITIS	An inflammation of the Achilles tendon, the tendon on the back of your calf.	Tendonitis is caused by overuse, from running or other weight-bearing sports with repetitive motion or long-term wear of the heel.	Wear sensible, appropriate footwear, warm up gradually and stretch before and after working out.	Take anti-inflammatory medication, ice your calf and avoid activity. Stretching, massage, heel pads and shoe inserts may help. Surgery is a last resort.



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