

# Hallux Rigidus

## Body Part

1st Metatarsophalangeal joint (big toe joint)

## Condition:

Hallux rigidus means “stiff big toe”, which is the main symptom of this condition. It’s a type of arthritis that affects the joint where your big toe attaches to your foot.

This condition happens when the cartilage covering the ends of the bones in your big toe joint is damaged or lost. This causes the joint space to narrow and a result eventually completely stiffens the toe.

Anyone can develop hallux rigidus, but it tends to affect people between the ages of 30 and 60.

## Causes:

- Being female.
  - Hallux rigidus is more common in females. Of the 110 participants included in a 2009 cross-sectional study on the demographics of hallux rigidus, 66 percent were female.
- Family history.
  - Having a family member with the condition appears to increase your risk for developing it yourself. This may come from inheriting a certain foot type or way of walking that can lead to the condition.
- Abnormal foot anatomy.
  - Abnormalities in the structure of your foot, such as a long or elevated first metatarsal bone, may increase your risk.
- Injury.
  - Injuries, such as stubbing your toe or spraining the joint in your big toe, can contribute to hallux rigidus.
- Overuse.
  - Regularly stooping and squatting can cause overuse of the joint in your big toe. People in certain jobs or who participate in sports that place a lot of stress on the joint have an increased risk of developing the condition.
- Certain medical conditions.
  - Osteoarthritis and inflammatory conditions, such as rheumatoid arthritis and gout, can cause hallux rigidus.

## Symptoms:

- Pain and stiffness in your big toe during use
  - Walking, running, lunging, jumping
- Swelling and inflammation around the joint.
- Pain even during rest
  - In severe cases
- Bone spur development
  - Hard painful lumps on top your big toe joint
- Complete lack of movement in the joint
- Limping
- In some cases people may have a totally rigid joint but no pain

## Treatment:

Treatment involves trying to limit the forces going through the joint.

- Footwear update/modification
  - Stiffer shoes are better
  - Carbon fibre plate to make the shoe rigid
- Activity/exercise modification
  - Modifying exercises to limit forces going through the joint should be conducted via the help of your physio or podiatrist.
- Anti-inflammatory
  - Topical or Oral
- Heat packs
- Surgery
  - In severe cases when no relief has come from the conservative treatments.

## Prognosis:

Hallux Rigidus is treated via management of pain and functionality. Once it occurs the only way to restore movement is via surgery, but is not recommended if pain relieve is achieved through conservative measures.



## Further information:

For further information, please contact our friendly team at Gen Health.

Picture Link: <https://www.asiamedicalspecialists.hk/en/health-info/24/Hallux-Rigidus-FAQs>

