

end
suffering
from foot

cramps

New Treatment for Neuromas

A big misnomer about neuromas of the foot is that the only solution is surgery. Years ago surgery would have been the only option; this is no longer true. I have seen many patients for a second opinion that were ready to have unnecessary neuroma surgery. The good news is that surgery for a neuroma is rarely needed. For the last five years I have treated this problem with a success rate of over ninety five percent and with solely conservative care.

First let's discuss what that cramping pain really is. A neuroma is an enlarged nerve between the toes that generally becomes irritated by the pressure exerted by footwear. Ninety percent of neuromas are between the third and fourth toe with the remaining ten percent being found between the second and third toe. Typically cowboy boots, ski boots and tight fitting shoes will cause a cramping symptom to occur. The neuroma sufferer often feels the need to remove all footwear and to



aggressively massage ones foot. Other common symptoms are: a burning feeling, an electrical shooting sensation that feels like pins and needles between the third and fourth toes, some patients say it feels like they have a continuous wrinkle in their sock and others suffer from cramping when they go to bed. These symptoms are typically being caused by a pinched nerve in the foot.

Traditionally, if the problem existed for less than six months a series of three steroid injections over

three months was indicated. If the patient did not respond to the injection treatment or had the problem over six months surgery was indicated and recommended.

The new way to treat most neuromas is an injection series of sclerosing alcohol directly into the nerve over a period of seven weeks. The injections are very tolerable and with no pain afterwards. Patients are able to return to their activities immediately. Permanent relief is obtained in about ninety five

5% percent of the cases. Roughly five percent of cases will need additional booster shots to achieve a successful outcome.

When all else has failed, a neuroma surgery may need to be performed. I feel no surgery should be taken lightly. Neuroma surgery can be fraught with serious complications if the surgery goes bad or does not work. Neuroma surgery should be entrusted to a foot specialist. Meticulous attention to technique is a must each and every time. A poor result can lead to years of unneeded discomfort. All too often, the surgeon is cavalier in doing the surgery because it is "just" a simple, soft tissue surgery. The reality is that your entire body relies on your feet and to opt for anything but a highly skilled, seasoned professional is akin to gambling. Your foot pain is real and my mission is to relieve your discomfort.

If your doctor is recommending surgery for your neuroma, remember this article and seek out a foot specialist that is familiar with the alcohol injection technique. The "old" fashioned surgical removal is rarely necessary or indicated.

ABOUT THE DOCTOR

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