

# Treatment to suit painful feet

Bunions, corns and crooked toes can be sore and lead to long-term problems if left untreated.

Advancements in foot surgery, however, mean some anomalies are permanently and quickly treatable, and with less pain than ever before.

Sydney Foot Surgery podiatric surgeon Dr Haydar Ozcan says anomalies affect people of all ages, but are more prevalent among women because of the shoes they are more likely to wear.

High heels and pointy shoes can look good but can exacerbate problems such as bunions, a mal-alignment of the joint that appears as a bump at the base of the big toe and can cause pain.

These bumps often cause further problems and make it difficult to find comfortable shoes.

"The most common age group is 40 to 70," Ozcan says. "By this age, feet have evolved and people have been wearing particularly uncomfortable footwear for a while."

"I also see a lot of female patients between the ages of 15 and 35, especially young women with congenital problems such as long or very short toes. They can't start work or new jobs because they can't wear the dressy shoes required. It's important to get help as soon as possible."

Most foot irregularities are manageable with the use of exercises, orthotics or special



Dr Haydar Ozcan says foot anomalies affect people of all ages.

footwear. But if that doesn't work, surgery is an option.

Any surgical or invasive procedure carries risks. Before proceeding, you should

seek a second opinion from an appropriately qualified health practitioner.

Ozcan practises a relatively new method of surgery known as minimally invasive

(keyhole) surgery to treat a variety of problems, from bunions to hammer toes and corns to flat feet.

"Minimally invasive keyhole surgery has been around for about 10 years, however it's only in the past five years we've really got to know more about the biomechanics of the feet and the extent of surgery we've had to do has lessened," Ozcan says.

"Many people avoid foot surgery because in the past it has been a complex procedure; the recovery time was long and it was very painful.

"Now, with MIS, there's minimal pain, less trauma, the healing process is faster and overall surgery costs are less."

No matter what treatment plan you

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- Dr Haydar Ozcan

choose, Ozcan says the most important thing for anyone with a foot problem is to get it checked out as soon as possible.

If problems are left untreated they can lead to further discomfort such as back pain, increased foot and ankle pain, knee issues and musculoskeletal disorders.

"I see it every day; unfortunately, rather than searching for help, some patients try covering their feet in closed shoes," Ozcan says.

"Sometimes they're even too embarrassed to show their feet to me. "They say, 'These must be the worst feet you've ever seen'. But that's never the case."

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### Dr Haydar Ozcan

Podiatric Foot & Ankle Surgeon, Minimally Invasive (Key Hole) Surgery, Adult and Children Reconstructive Foot Surgery

Fellow of Australasian College of Foot & Ankle Surgeons

Fellow of Academy of Ambulatory Foot & Ankle Surgeons (USA)

Dr Haydar Ozcan is a Podiatric Foot & Ankle Specialist Surgeon who also holds a Fellowship in Minimally Invasive (Key Hole) Foot Surgery from USA. He is an expert in adult and juvenile bunions, hammer toes, deformed feet, flat feet, ingrown toe nails and arthritic joints. His techniques are aimed to provide patients faster recovery, long term comfort and cosmetically pleasing results. He operates in private hospitals with a surgical team.



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