

## **Mr Keith Winters MBChB, FRACS (Orth) Specialist Orthopaedic Surgeon**

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### **Hallux valgus (Bunion)**

This is a valgus deformity of the great toe. The enlarged medial eminence is called the bunion. The primary deformity is varus of the 1<sup>st</sup> metatarsal with resultant lateral deviation of the toe. The causes include Familial, footwear, inflammatory arthropathies, anatomical abnormalities and neuromuscular disorders.

#### **What to ask in the History:**

- Duration
- Progression of deformity
- Pain – classically over the medial bunion with tight footwear
- Stiffness – usually not an issue unless arthritis is developing
- Swelling – inflamed bursa over the bunion
- Footwear restrictions
- Treatment – orthotics, analgesia
- Family history

#### **What to look for on Examination**

- Lower limb alignment – bunions associated with genu valgus, flatfeet
- Severity of the bunion – classified as mild <20°, moderate 20-40° or severe >40°
- Pronation of great toe – usually occurs when deformity >20°
- Lesser toe deformities – hammered toes, over-riding great toe or lateral deviation
- Callus formation under lesser metatarsal heads
- Correctability of the valgus
- Range of movement in the corrected position
- Hypermobility of the 1<sup>st</sup> ray - >1cm of dorsal MT movement when foot held at 90°
- Instability of the lesser MTP joints
- Sensation over the medial toe – may be reduced from irritation or stretching of the cutaneous nerve
- Tight gastrocnemius muscles – Silfverskiold's test, often driving force for forefoot pathology

#### **What investigations to order**

- Standing AP and Lateral of the foot
- Ultrasound if suspicion of associated Morton's neuroma

#### **How to treat**

- Footwear modification – wide toe box shoes, stretching of existing shoes to accommodate bunion, no heels
- Toe spreaders and toe cushions for lesser toes
- Analgesia
- Podiatric shaving of calluses
- Eccentric gastroc stretches

#### **When to refer**

- Intractable pain
- Footwear issues
- Lesser toe deformities – hint of overlap, lateral deviation, hammered/claw

#### **What Mr Winters may do**

- Chevron osteotomy – mild deformities
- Scarf/Akin – for moderate or severe deformities
- Lapidus – for severe deformities, hypermobile 1<sup>st</sup> ray, associated midfoot arthritis.
- MTP joint fusion – for associated MTP joint arthritis