A guide for patients about

functional hallux limitus

This leaflet is for people who have been told they have functional hallux limitus.
It explains the condition and what can be done to help if it is painful.
It gives key words that may be useful if you want to search for more information on the internet.

What is functional hallux limitus?

When you walk, your big toe bends and takes your weight, allowing your heel to lift off the ground, so your body can move forward. For some people, even though the toe bends normally when sitting, it doesn't when the body's weight is pressing down on the front of the foot. This problem is known as functional hallux limitus.

It is called functional hallux limitus because it happens when walking (functional), it affects the big toe (hallux), which temporarily locks with limited movement (limitus) - functional hallux limitus or the 'big toe does not work when walking'.

What are the symptoms of functional hallux limitus?

Often there is no pain within the foot, unless you have any additional arthritic changes in the big toe joint. Symptoms may be felt elsewhere in the body, for example, in your second toe, your knee, lower back or even your neck.

What should I do if I have functional hallux limitus?

Having functional hallux limitus changes the way you walk. There are three main ways you can adapt, in each case you will need to delay lifting your heel.

1. Bend your ankle and therefore your knee to move your body weight forward, until your body's weight tips the foot over the big toe.
2. Roll your foot inwards, flattening the arch of your foot and walk over the inside of your big toe **or** walk over the outside of your forefoot foot to avoid your big toe.

Ask your podiatrist to show you the different ways and choose one that works for you.

Can treatment help?

An appropriately designed insole which fits inside a suitable shoe may help. It helps to restore normal movements of the big toe by shifting the body's weight away from the base of the big toe. Once normal movements of the big toe are restored, the symptoms felt elsewhere in your body often improve.

Where can I find out more?

If you have any questions we are happy to help. You may also like to search for '**functional hallux limitus'** on the internet for more information.

Contact us

Outpatient clinics

Phone: 0300 123 6756

Press 1 for clinics in Ashford, Dover, Deal and Folkestone
Press 2 for clinics in Canterbury, Faversham, Herne Bay, Whitstable and Thanet
Press 3 for clinics in Dartford, Gravesham, Swanley, Sittingbourne and Sheppey
Press 4 for clinics in Maidstone, Sevenoaks and Tonbridge
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Podiatric surgery

Phone: 0300 123 1540 and press 1.

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Phone: 0300 123 1807, 8am to 5pm, Monday to Friday
Please say if you would like the team to call you back
Text: 07899 903499 **Email:** kcht.cct@nhs.net

Address: Customer Care Team, Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust, Unit J, Concept Court, Shearway Business Park, Folkestone, Kent CT19 4RJ **Web:** www.kentcht.nhs.uk

If you need communication support, an interpreter or this information in another language, audio, Braille, Easy Read or large print, please ask a member of staff.

You will be asked for your agreement to treatment and, if necessary, your permission to share your personal information.

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