

# Common Foot Myths

## **Myth #1: Ingrown nails are caused by improper cutting.**

It's extremely rare that someone caused their own ingrown nail by poor trimming. More likely, the nail was already so curved-in and digging into the skin that they had to cut the corner back in order to create some semblance of relief. The nail is most likely excessively curved because the growth center or nail matrix beneath the cuticle, is excessively curved. The nail will then grow with that same excessively curved shape, causing the ingrown. And no, cutting a "V" at the end of your nail does not work. Ingrown nails are almost always hereditary. Thank your parents.

## **Myth #2: Bunions are caused by wearing tight or high-heeled shoes.**

Nope. Tight shoes will cause bunions to be painful, but are not the reason you have a bunion to begin with. Bunions develop over many years because of instability in the way your feet function. If your feet are unstable, as we see with excessive flattening of the arch, then a life-long muscle imbalance slowly pulls the big toe toward your second toe and the bone behind it moves the other way, causing the bone to be prominent. Your foot function and instability is also hereditary. Don't blame your shoes.

## **Myth #3: Heel pain will go away on its own.**

Sure, it might go away for awhile, as it can come and go. But it will come back. If it went away quickly on its own and stayed away, heel pain wouldn't be the #1 complaint seen in most podiatry offices. We routinely see patients who have been living with heel pain for years. YEARS! Most heel pain is plantar fasciitis, or inflammation of a ligament on the bottom of your foot. It is caused by the same instability that leads to the hammertoes and bunions discussed above. But there is no reason to live in pain. We can get you comfortable quickly by eliminating the inflammation and keep you pain-free by providing your feet with proper support, stability and improved foot function.

## **Myth #4 Toenail fungus is only a cosmetic tissue.**

Toenail fungus is an infection. Fungus gets in between the layers of the nail and spreads the layers apart, causing the nail to thicken and discolor and in some cases, become painful. If you ever wondered why your athlete's foot won't go away, or keeps coming back, it is because athlete's foot is caused by the same fungus that is in your nails. It can start in the nails and spread to your skin, or vice versa. Get it treated by a podiatrist once and for all.

**Myth #5: If you can walk on an injured foot, it isn't broken.**

It is possible to walk on a broken foot or ankle, depending on the severity of the injury and your threshold for pain. Not only can walking on a broken foot make the injury worse, it can also lead to serious complications. Stay off an injured foot until it is examined by a foot and ankle surgeon.

So before you try some crazy method for your feet pain, aches, and problems, give us a call at Premier Podiatry Services so that we can evaluate your condition, treat you appropriately, and get you back to your active lifestyle, quickly and comfortably.