

INGROWN TOENAILS:

What are they
and what can
you do about
them today?



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INTRODUCTION

Ingrown toenails are a common, painful condition, where the edges or corners of your nails grow into the skin next to the nail.

Some cases of ingrown toenails can cause complications where the condition worsens and becomes chronic, and will require medical attention. The risk of complications is higher if you have diabetes or other conditions that cause poor circulation.

In this guide, we explore the condition of **Ingrown Toenails**, its causes and symptoms, as well as the best treatments available to remedy it.

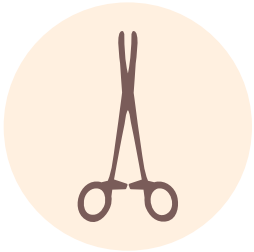
WHAT CAUSES INGROWN TOENAILS?

Ingrown toenails can be extremely painful. The nail is essentially cutting into your skin. This happens when you cut your nails too short and you may leave a rough edge or a corner at the side of your nail that can pierce your skin as the nail grows. So the way to prevent ingrown toenails is to trim your toenails by gently following the curve of your toes. Make sure there are no sharp edges left at the side of your nails.



Ingrown toenails occur in both men and women; and according to research by the UK's National Health Service (NHS), they may be more common in people with sweaty feet, such as teenagers.

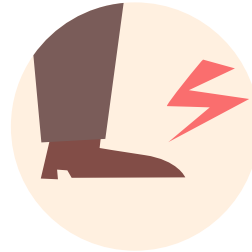
OTHER CAUSES



Wrong pedicure



Hereditary predisposition



Uncomfortable shoes



Foot fungus

- **Fungal nail infections:** which can change the shape of your nails and make them thicker.
- **Genetics:** you may have inherited the family trait to develop ingrown toenails.
- **Trauma:** you may develop ingrown toenails after stubbing your toe or dropping a heavy object onto your toe.
- **Tight fitting shoes:** constrictions can develop into ingrown toenails.
- **Diseases:** conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis that change the shape of your toe can lead to ingrown toenails.
- **The way you walk:** if you roll onto your toe when you're walking, the pressure on your toes can develop into ingrown toenails.

Early-stage symptoms of ingrown toenails include:

- skin next to the nail becomes tender, swollen, or hard
- pain when there is pressure on the toe
- fluid building up around the toe

However if your toe becomes infected, symptoms may include:

- red, swollen, painful skin
- bleeding
- oozing pus
- overgrowth of skin around the toe



It's important to treat your ingrown toenail as soon as possible to stop your symptoms getting worse. If your toe has become inflamed, swollen and painful, it probably won't be resolved without professional treatment. Antibiotics rarely work on their own. The nail spike, which is causing the problem, has to be removed first.



INGROWN TOENAILS

TREATMENT

At Capital Podiatry, our first step is to perform a minor procedure to carefully remove the nail spur which is digging into the side of your toe. We will also file the side of the nail to make it smooth with no rough edges. We may flush your wound with saline to give your toe a chance to heal. We will bandage your toe if it is required and will discuss ways that you can look after your toe going forward.



If your ingrown nail flares up again and again, we will talk to you about a permanent solution.

It's an operation called a ***partial nail avulsion*** and involves permanently removing the edge of the offending nail and sterilising part of your nail bed.

The procedure is painless because it is performed under local anaesthetic and the recovery time is very fast (within 1-2 weeks). Most people can return to work within a couple of days, as long as they are able to wear open toed shoes.



