



## Dr. Hedrick's Lesser Toe Deformity Factsheet

### Lesser Toe Deformity

**What is it?** Lesser toe deformity can be caused by other medical conditions you have, genetics, old injuries, or as part of the normal process of aging. More information can be found [here](#).

**How is it diagnosed?** Dr. Hedrick will diagnose these deformities when he examines your foot. He will often take x-rays to rule out any other problems in the forefoot and to evaluate the severity of your deformity.

**How is it treated?** Changing to roomier shoes or adding an insert can successfully manage most symptoms related to less toe deformities. However, surgery can be indicated if the pain is severe, shoe wear is dramatically limited, or the deformity is causing problems such as a callus or ulcer.

### Hammer Toe / Angle Toe Correction

A hammer toe is when the first joint of the second, third, fourth, or fifth toe is bent up at the base and down at the tip. This can cause the toe to rub on the shoe or can cause pain on the bottom of the foot. An angle toe is when a toe pulls over to the right or left, causing it to rub on neighboring toes. Dr. Hedrick's surgical correction involves releasing soft tissue that is too tight and cutting bones in the toe, which allows them to move into a better position. Most toe deformities can be corrected without pins, but severe deformities might require them; they extend out the tip of your toe and are kept in for 3-4 weeks before being removed in the office.

**Surgery:** This is an outpatient surgery that is done under an ankle block and light sedation (general surgical information can be found [here](#)). You will wake up with a bandage and a post-op shoe on your foot. Leave the shoe and dressing on at all times until you return to Dr. Hedrick's office. The bandage must be kept dry. You should rest and keep your foot elevated for the first week. When you are comfortable doing so, you may put all your body weight on the operative foot, which is protected by the post-op shoe.

**First post-operative appointment (10-14 days after surgery):** Your dressing and sutures will be removed. You may now shower over the incision, but you should not soak the foot in a bathtub or pool. It is essential that you wear the post-op shoe any time you stand and walk in order to protect the surgical correction. You may remove the post-op shoe for sleeping or bathing. If you have pins, to help prevent an infection, you should clean where the pin enters your skin once a day with a Q-tip that has been dipped in a solution of half hydrogen peroxide and half water. You should keep the foot covered with a clean, dry sock.

Second post-operative appointment (3-4 weeks after surgery): If you have a pin, it will be removed in the office. Most people describe the sensation as pressure rather than pain. However, you may choose to take pain medicine before your visit since there is not an effective way to numb the area. After the pin is pulled, you may transition to regular shoe wear and activities whenever you are comfortable. Please note that hammer toe corrections are often done in combination with other surgeries, so you might have further restrictions from the additional procedures.

Third post-operative appointment (6-7 weeks after surgery): At this appointment, we will confirm that the toe has maintained its corrected position, that your pain has continued to decrease, and that you have transitioned into regular shoes. If you can tell you are doing well and have no questions, you may cancel this appointment. It is normal for the toe to remain swollen for many months after surgery. The corrected toe will be stiffer than it was before surgery.