

## PAINFUL CROSSOVER TOE CAN KEEP SENIORS FROM BEING ACTIVE

Crossover toe is a common foot problem that can inhibit physical activity for older Americans, but outpatient surgery can correct the deformity and keep senior citizens active and on their feet.

Individuals with hammertoes, bunions or a second toe that extends beyond the big toe are most susceptible to developing crossover toe as they age. Foot deformities like crossover toe syndrome (a syndrome in which the second toe gradually moves across the big toe) are a common problem among seniors and can be painful and difficult to walk.

The first symptom of crossover toe is pain in the ball of the foot caused by a tear in the underlying joint capsule (plantar plate), fostering instability that allows the second toe to fall out of alignment and eventually drift.

Pain in the ball of the foot is the first warning sign indicating the second toe might crossover and eventually limit the activity of an older patient. If the pain persists and the toe starts to drift, shoe changes and special inserts can help, but if left unchecked surgery may be recommended to correct the toe and the alignment of the joint.

Surgery to correct crossover toe is an outpatient procedure performed with a local anesthesia. Patients with bunions or hammertoes are advised to have those deformities corrected during the surgery.

Given the poor cardiovascular health risks associated with physical inactivity in older patients, most experts advise those with persistent pain in the ball of the foot and anyone who has developed crossover toe to seek treatment and not let the problem restrict their ability to stay active.