

## Metatarsalgia

**Metatarsalgia** is a term referring to general pain in the ball of the foot.

The metatarsal bones are the five long bones which make up the forefoot and therefore form the lever through which weight is transferred. The pain is usually found under the ball of the first toe or more diffuse under the balls of the second to fourth toes.

A common cause for this ailment is shoes which are too narrow and compress the forefoot, or shoes with excessive heel

heights, which focus the weight on the ball of the foot. We also lose some of the **plantar fat pad** as we age, which reduces the natural cushion these joints receive. Other reasons can be an abnormal function of the foot which prevents the equal distribution of weight on the metatarsal bones.

Treatment involves restoring the cushioning of the metatarsal head area, and relief through a **metatarsal pad**.

This device, when properly incorporated into a **foot orthosis**, restores and supports the **natural transverse arch** of the foot.

Footwear with a wider toe-box and possibly a **rocker sole** can also be effective. This condition may also be related to **Morton's Neuroma** or **Pes Cavus** (high arch) or **Sesamoiditis** (see additional information).