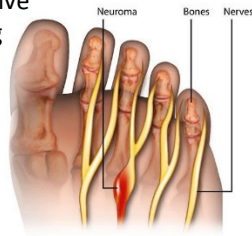


Non-Surgical Relief for Foot Neuromas

In last month's newsletter we wrote about a foot condition known as hammer toe. It involved flexion deformities with the lesser toes (2nd – 5th toes). There have been some questions arise about other similar, but different forefoot, toe conditions. One such forefoot condition, which also responds favorably to chiropractic foot adjustments, is known as Morton's neuroma. It's often also simply referred to as a neuroma.

A neuroma is a thickening of the protective sheath which covers the nerve supplying the toes. There are individual nerve branches that pass between the metatarsals (long bones of the foot) to each of the toes. These tiny nerves may become compressed between the heads of the adjacent metatarsals.



The foot is comprised of 26 bones joined together by ligaments. With continued stress from walking, running, and other types of physical activity, the foot bones and joints may lose their healthy alignment.

The metatarsals when properly aligned have plenty of space between them. However, due to abnormalities in the gait pattern and arches of the foot, the second through fourth metatarsals tend to become more closely approximated.

Metatarsal head approximation constricts the space through which the intermetatarsal plantar nerves pass. With continued stress, pressure can build up within that narrowed space, therefore causing friction on the sheath that protects the nerve.

Common symptoms include pain and/or numbness in the ball of the foot, between the toes or into the involved toes. The neuroma can even create a sensation as if there is a pebble in your shoe or a fold in your sock.

Patients suffering from a neuroma are often led to believe they need to have repeated cortisone injections and/or surgery to remove the involved nerve tissue. Both of those options can lead to the development of permanent scar tissue in the same area as the neuroma, which may cause further foot concerns.

You should know that many patients have been helped non-surgically through specific adjustments to the bones and joints of the feet.

Chiropractic adjustments to the hind foot, mid foot and metatarsal area can relieve the stress and reduce the pressure that has caused the nerve sheath to become affected in the first place. Before contemplating surgery, we highly encourage neuroma patients to consider chiropractic foot care at our clinic. We really do offer a different level of care for foot conditions, compared to standard chiropractic practices.

Preventing Hand Tendonitis as a Musician

Musicians present quite frequently with hand pain, numbness, and sometimes weakness. There are many different hand disorders that can affect a musician's wrists and hands. This is because of the persistent wrist and hand stress encountered during the playing of instruments. Stringed instruments are amongst the worst when it comes to developing a hand problem, although the piano, drums and brass instruments can produce hand stress to a similar degree.

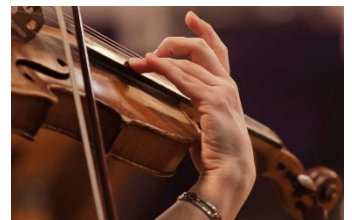
That doesn't mean every cellist or violinist is going to develop a hand condition, however depending upon body mechanics, posture, and technique while playing the musical instrument, multiple factors may contribute to a musician's hand health and potential for injury.

Two factors to consider when playing an instrument and the potential for developing an injury are repetitive movement and sustained postures.

Repetitive hand use by itself isn't the provoking cause for injury; rather it's the prolonged use of the hands in a repetitive fashion, most usually accompanied by some abnormal or awkward sustained wrist or finger posture.

Sustained postures with the arms and hands in an awkwardly stressed position, while gripping or holding the instrument can lead to fatigue and overwhelming musculoskeletal stress. A musician's wrist or hand injury is often related to both a structural and functional problem involving the muscles, bones and joints. Years of sustained pressure or repetitive stress can lead to tiny misalignments in the carpal (wrist) region, elbow and possibly the shoulder.

Continued use of the hands and arms after these joint misalignments have been present for a period will often be a major contributor to the development and acceleration of a musculoskeletal injury.



Tendonitis is one of the most common injuries that musicians develop. It can present as pain or discomfort in the elbow, forearm or wrist while playing an instrument, especially stringed instruments. Some musicians may experience pain in a single finger while performing specific actions.

Proper realignment of the carpal bones, elbow and shoulder joints, is one of the most effective corrective measures a musician can take to reduce and eliminate tendonitis. Once tendonitis is present and significant pain, dysfunction or disability has occurred, a focused treatment plan may be necessary to fully correct the condition and prevent it from returning.

Musicians will benefit greatly from specific chiropractic adjustments to their elbows, wrists and hands. In fact, with a chronic tendinitis condition, we may check the alignment of the entire upper extremity including the shoulder, elbow and wrist/hand.

Even those musicians who are not suffering with tendonitis or other wrist or hand symptoms, should be checked for a periodic chiropractic wrist and hand adjustment as a preventative measure. Proper structural alignment will allow the musician to play in a more relaxed fashion, and peak performance.