

TOP 6 RUNNER FOOT INJURIES & WHAT THEY FEEL LIKE

Causes: increasing / high mileage, poor gait (supination / pronation) improper shoes, old shoes, reduced hip strength & flexibility

Chiropractic fun fact:

While we focus on your spine as the source of all your nerves, we can also adjust your extremities!

1 Navicular bone

A boat-shaped bone that sits on the top, inside of your foot and is an essential piece to your arch. It articulates with 5 of the 6 other ankle bones, making it a crucial player in the pivoting and shifting motions as you walk and run!

What it feels like:

Usually, if your navicular bone is subluxated (misaligned), you feel it on the top of your foot, however you can also feel a sharp, localized pain or discomfort in the inside bottom of your foot too. If you wear shoes with an elevated heel, it is more likely for your navicular bone to drop. And if you step or fall off a curb or elevated surface onto a hard or rocky foundation, your navicular bone can lodge upwards to compensate.

2 Plantar Fasciitis (PF)

The fascia that lines the bottom of your arch can be strained or torn due to the repetitive and pounding action of running, especially here in Brevard where so many of us run the roads. The muscles in your foot must be both strong and adaptable to withstand the pressure of the sport and if they are not, sometimes the plantar fascia will start to break down.

What it feels like:

Typically starts just in front of the heel bone (or calcaneus) and/or spreads across the arch of your foot. It starts with a 'crunchy' sensation when you rub it, then becomes a sharp, stabbing pain as if it were a rubber band that is being stretched too far along the bottom of your foot.



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6 Talus bone

Located in the top and deep in your ankle, this is a pivot point for the up and down motion of your foot.

What it feels like:

It usually subluxates upwards and may not be painful! It more often presents as a reduced range of motion in dorsiflexion, or bringing your toes to your shin.

5 Cuboid bone

A small bone on the outside of your foot, close to your ankle, this bone can be subluxated for a number of reasons including runners who supinate (putting more pressure on the outside of your foot) or those that have a normal stride and have increased their speed work (which increases the forces transmitting through your foot and arch).

What it feels like:

If you catch yourself moving your ankle in a multitude of directions after your run, trying to get your 'ankle to pop,' or if you feel a dull but specific pain on the outside of your foot when running, your cuboid may be subluxated.

3 Neuroma

Inflammation and possible scar tissue that accumulates between your toes (any of them) due to friction. It typically hurts worse when you run and after your run and it will become increasingly bothersome when not walking.

What it feels like:

A sharp or stinging pain between the toes, or in the front of your foot, sometimes accompanied by visual swelling, tingling, burning, numbness and the feeling that there is pebble or marble in the ball of your foot or between your toes.

Note: A neuroma is not a subluxation, however if the joints in your foot are not moving properly, it may lead to rubbing of these bones and stagnant inflammation that could develop a neuroma. If you think you may have a neuroma, please see your primary care physician and we are happy to co-manage with them to treat it.

4 Fracture

Can be in any bone in the foot and can be from a specific trauma or impact, or could be stress-related from a repetitive activity that slowly pulls away the outer layer of bone.

What it feels like:

Sharp, pinpoint and sometimes throbbing pain that can be tender to the touch, swollen or bruised. There is increased pain when walking or running and initially feels better when sitting or during non-weight bearing activities (biking, swimming, etc.). But as it progresses, it can start throbbing during these non-weight bearing activities and can wake you up or keep you up at night.

If sprung from trauma, these symptoms start quickly and typically you can remember exactly when it started hurting. If stress related, it comes on gradually and you may not know when or how it started.