

# Lakeview Community Wellness Center Orthopaedic Connection

## A Bunion, A Tailor's Bunion,???

By Thomas J. Haverbush, M.D.  
Orthopaedic Surgeon

*Transforming patient information into patient understanding.*

A bunion, as everyone knows, affects the big toe and is a prominent bulge on the inner side of the joint. I am often asked what the difference is between the two.

A tailor's bunion, also called bunionette, is present on the little toe side.

Both types are a protrusion at the joint where the long foot bones (metatarsals) meet the small bones of the toes.

In the case of a tailor's bunion the protrusion is caused by bone and tissue that moves out of place forcing the little toe to bend toward the three middle toes of the foot.

### **The Results**

- Redness
- Swelling or puffy
- Very tender bump
- Difficulty walking
- Hard to find shoes

### **Comes Over Years**

A tailor's bunion, like a regular bunion comes on over years from abnormal pressure and motion applied to the bony prominence of the fifth metatarsal.

### **Who Was Tailor?**

Well, it's referring to an occupation not a person. Apparently tailors often sat with legs crossed while working. This led to pressure on the little toe joint outer aspect.

It has been named this "forever" and no one knows who began calling it this. There are many things named like this in medicine which I find curious.

Maybe they didn't wear shoes or maybe they wore flip flops!! But, I digress.

Modern real causes are inherited foot types, the shoes you wear and perhaps how you walk.

### **Shoes**

Maybe flip flops are better after all! Shoes that are too narrow, too small or have a heel higher than 2 ¼ inches are common aggravators of bunions.

When shoes are too small, there is not enough room for the natural spread of the toes. And elevated heels focus pressure on the toes.

### **Treatment**

Both types can be managed by never forcing your foot into a shoe that doesn't fit properly. Shoes must have adequate width and depth for the toes.

- Creative padding to protect and cushion the bunion or bunionette can help a lot.
- Advil or similar can help with pain and inflammation.

- Don't apply ice if you have diabetes or poor circulation.

### **Surgery**

Surgery can be very helpful for both types of bunions if walking is too painful and other means have not helped.

Please remember that anyone can make an appointment to see Dr. Haverbush at his office in Alma, at 315 Warwick Dr., across from Gratiot Medical Center. Call 989-463-6092 to make an appointment.

And don't forget every article I have written for Lakeview Area News is on my Website, [www.orthopodsurgeon.com](http://www.orthopodsurgeon.com). Check it out. I specialize in you.

Be well.

Dr. Haverbush