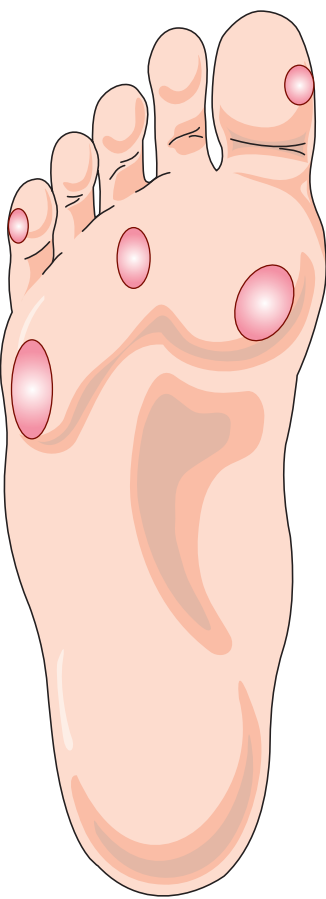




Corns & calluses

Corns and calluses are extra cells made in a skin area that gets repeated rubbing or squeezing.



Common sites on the bottom of the foot for corns and calluses.

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

- Corns are areas of dead skin on the tops or sides of the joints or on the skin between the toes.
- Calluses are patches of dead skin usually found on pressure spots, such as the balls or heels of the feet, on the hands, and on the knees. Calluses are thick and feel hard to the touch. They are often larger than corns.

CAUSES

Footwear that fits poorly causes corns and calluses. So can activities that cause friction or pressure on the hands, knees, and feet.



TREATMENT

Self-care treats most cases. If not, a family doctor or foot doctor (podiatrist) can scrape the hardened tissue and peel away the corn with stronger solutions. Sometimes warts lie beneath corns and need to be treated, too.



TRIAGE QUESTIONS

With a corn or callus, do you have any signs of infection, such as fever, swelling, redness, and/or pus?

NO **YES** ➔ **SEE DOCTOR**

With a corn or callus, do you have circulation problems or diabetes?

NO **YES** ➔ **SEE DOCTOR**

Do you have one or both of these problems even after using self-care measures?

- Continued or worse pain
- No improvement after 2 to 3 weeks

NO **YES** ➔ **CALL DOCTOR**

USE SELF-CARE



SELF-CARE / PREVENTION

{**Note:** Persons with diabetes should see a doctor for treatment for foot problems.}

Corns

- Don't pick at corns. Don't use toenail scissors, clippers, or any sharp tool to cut off corns.
- Don't wear shoes that fit poorly or that squeeze your toes together.
- Soak your feet in warm water to soften the corn. Then, rub with a pumice stone or nail file to remove a layer of toughened skin.
- Wear socks with shoes and sandals to reduce friction on your feet.
- Cover the corn with a protective, nonmedicated pad or bandage which you can buy at drug stores.
- If the outer layers of a corn have peeled away, apply a nonprescription liquid of up to 40% salicylic acid. Gently rub the corn off with cotton gauze.
- Ask a shoe repair person to sew a metatarsal bar onto your shoe to use when a corn is healing.

Calluses

- Don't try to cut a callus off.
- Soak your feet in warm water to soften the callus. Pat it dry.
- Rub the callus gently with a pumice stone.
- As with corns, apply a non-prescription patch containing up to 40% salicylic acid. Follow the directions on the package.
- Cover calluses with protective pads. You can get these at drug stores.
- Don't wear poorly fitting shoes or other sources of friction that may lead to calluses.
- Wear gloves for a hobby or work that puts pressure on your hands.
- Wear knee pads for activities that put pressure on your knees.
- If you have custom-made shoe inserts (orthotics), wear them as recommended by your doctor.