

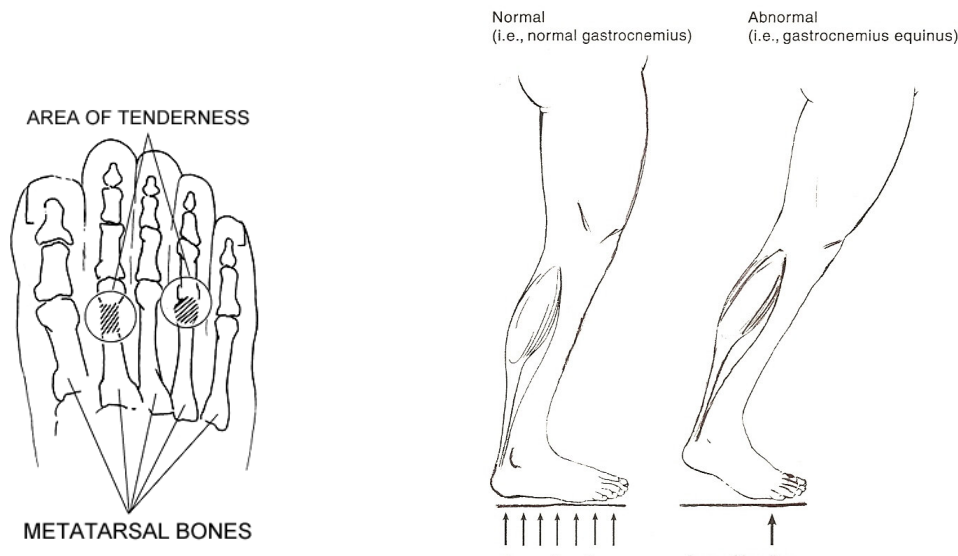
## METATARSALGIA

Metatarsalgia is pain in the ball of the foot. It is usually felt in the sole of the foot and sometimes feel like "walking on pebbles". Other people feel a more diffuse vague pain, ache or burning. Some people have trouble around only one or two toes. Others have it throughout one or both feet.

### Cause of Metatarsalgia

Anything which puts extra stress on the front of the foot can cause metatarsalgia.

- a stiff ankle joint which results in an early heel lift
- being overweight
- high-heeled shoes
- certain foot shapes such as a high-arched "cavus" foot in which the bones in the front of the foot (metatarsals) point down into the sole to an excessive extent, or a long metatarsal bone which takes extra pressure
- claw or hammer toes which press the metatarsals down towards the ground
- A bunion or arthritis in the big toe can weaken the big toe and throw extra stress onto the ball of the foot. This can also happen after an operation on the big toe, such as a bunion correction.



### Treatment

Most of the time the treatment of a metatarsalgia involves practical measures that ease the foot pain:

- Stretching exercises to increase ankle motion
- Soft soled shoes
- Wider fitting shoes
- Metatarsal Pad
- Forefoot rocker on the shoe
- Over-the-counter arch support
- A custom foot orthotic with a metatarsal pad
- Anti-inflammatory medication
- Cortisone injection
- Occasionally, surgery may be necessary to remove a bony prominence or correct a deformity.