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Tailor's Bunion (Bunionette)

A tailor's bunion is an enlargement along the outer side of the foot, just behind the little toe. The bump is due to a malposition or abnormal enlargement of the fifth metatarsal (Figure 4.8). These changes may be secondary to an old injury, a congenital anomaly, or chronic irritation from shoes. It was originally termed a "tailor's" bunion because tailors at one time would sit on the floor cross-legged; the constant pressure on the outside of the foot would cause this bump.

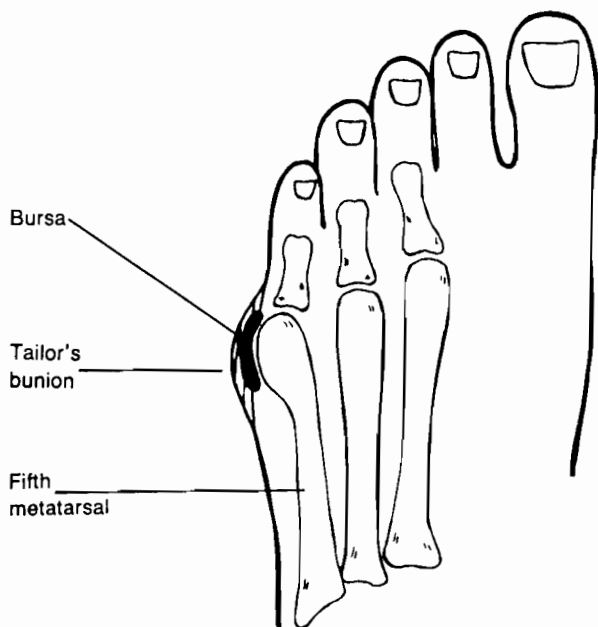


Figure 4.8 The tailor's bunion is composed of the head of the fifth metatarsal and an overlying bursa.

The tailor's bunion is currently a problem most frequently caused by aggravation from women's dress shoes. However, at times it can also be a source of irritation to the athlete. Bursitis (inflammation of a fluid-filled sac) may develop between the skin and bone, with increasing redness, swelling, and pain in the area.

If a problem appears to be developing in this area, initial treatment should consist of trying wider shoes or shoes with a softer upper. A protective aperture pad of self-adhesive felt or foam can be cut to fit around the area (Figure 4.9). In most cases, this relieves the problem. However, if the bony changes are very prominent and subject to repeated irritation, the pain may persist. If this happens, a surgical procedure may be necessary to remove the enlarged portion of bone.

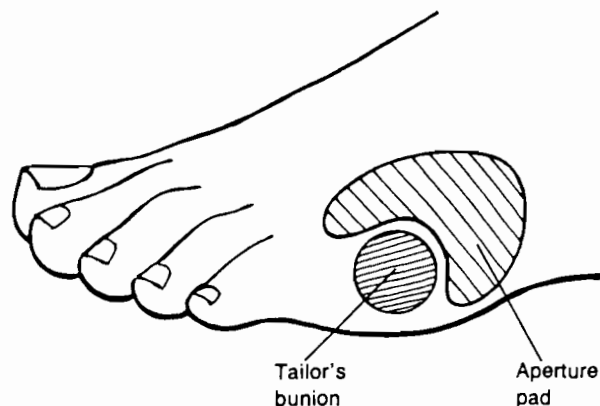


Figure 4.9 The tailor's bunion can be protected with an aperture pad.