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Ease body aches like bunions and neck pain with Dr Kevin Koo at The Bone & Joint Centre

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As Singapore opens up and learns to live with **Covid**, you'd want to make sure your body is in the right form to embrace life in the new normal, reports Mavis Teo.

When the circuit breakers started and the social scene quietened down, our feet probably heaved a huge sigh of relief. Free from the confines of toe-pinching high heels that used to be worn for hours on end, our extremities now have room to relax and stretch. With fewer in-person social and work engagements, this downtime allows those suffering from persistent orthopaedic issues like bunions to finally seek help and focus on a complete, worry-free recovery.

Resolve & Resume

Shortly after the first pandemic lockdown, Dr Kevin Koo, director and consultant orthopaedic surgeon at The Bone & Joint Centre located within Mount Elizabeth Medical Centre began to see a spike in the number of patients seeking keyhole surgery to remove their bunions. As word continues to spread from recovering patients that the surgery is less invasive than expected, the surge in requests has continued.

Wearing tight and ill-fitting shoes over prolonged periods can cause angry little bumps called bunions to form over time near the joint at the base of your big toe. Bunions are actually bony deformities, and can also be inherited. If left untreated, bunions can cause a lot of discomfort and affect your mobility over time. Ladies who feel like the best versions of themselves in sky-high stilettos will also find that wearing them will increasingly be a painful and torturous experience.

If your bunions are likely to flare up again when your social life resumes, consider getting them treated before the party calendar is in full swing again – especially if your bunions could potentially become debilitating or prevent you from slipping into those stunning designer shoes. Fortunately for sufferers, available at The Bone & Joint Centre is an innovative and minimally invasive keyhole surgery technique specially devised for correcting bunions.

While the traditional method requires making a 5cm to 8cm long incision and correcting the deformity with a surgical saw, Dr Koo uses an updated breakthrough surgical method that requires only a few small incisions, each between 2mm and 4mm in length. However, Dr Koo qualifies that this less invasive surgical option is only suitable for mild to moderate bunions. Those keen to correct their bunions should visit the clinic early for a diagnosis so that it is still possible to benefit from this technique.

Demand for other types of keyhole surgery to correct various chronic orthopaedic issues is also on the rise. While surgery is not required for the majority of ankle sprains, it may be necessary if a patient's ankle is persistently unstable even after undergoing



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it may be necessary if a patient's ankle is persistently unstable even after undergoing months of rehabilitation and non-surgical treatment. Dr Koo's practice has also seen a rise in such surgery requests. To that end, The Bone & Joint Centre offers a breakthrough procedure called the Arthroscopic Brostrum-Gould, which is a keyhole ankle ligament repair technique. According to Dr Koo, this technique requires only a 2mm to 3mm incision, in contrast to a 2cm to 3cm one using the traditional method. The Arthroscopic Brostrum-Gould procedure is effectively less invasive and painful with fewer wound complications. Patients may resume low-impact activities after six weeks, and high-impact sports after three months.



Dr Kevin Koo

Workout and WFH Woes

While giving us the reprieve to recover from surgery, the pandemic lull has also created other problems for our feet and other moving parts. Dr Koo is seeing more patients with issues that range from heel pain to swollen feet. Going barefoot in the house for long periods or taking long walks in shoes that are not supportive enough have given rise to heel pain in more people. As more individuals embrace new fitness fad HIIT (High Intensity Interval Training), the doctor has observed an increase in reported injuries from insufficient warm-up or the wrong workout techniques.

Patients with repetitive stress injuries as well as back and neck pains caused by working in their home offices are also on the rise. The simple fact is that an aesthetically pleasant home working environment may not necessarily be ergonomic. The infrastructure in your office is likely to have been set up to support long hours of sitting at a desk, while your writing desk at home may be beautiful but detrimental to your posture, which results in back and neck problems. You could also be working in bed – something that could wreak havoc on your musculoskeletal system as it is thrown out of balance when you hold an awkward position for sustained periods.

Repetitive strain injury is yet another bugbear for office-based professionals. Unbeknownst to many, typing at a desk that is not of the right height for you could strain your wrists even if you don't feel it at first. This could lead to nerve compression and carpal tunnel syndrome. In severe cases, fine hand surgery is required to fix the problem.

Whether it is bunions or other orthopaedic conditions you are struggling with, early medical intervention is always the best solution. As restrictions are progressively lifted by governments around the world and companies adjust to the new normal, the daily office grind and even travel could soon be on the cards. To bring that spring back into your step, there really isn't a better time than now.

Visit [The Bone & Joint Centre's website](#) for more information.

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Note:

The information in this article is accurate as of the date of publication.

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