

Help us get it right

If you have a complaint, concern, comment or compliment, please let us know by speaking to a member of staff. We learn from your feedback and use the information you provide to improve and develop our services.

If you would like to talk to someone outside the service contact the **Patient Experience Team** on **0113 220 8585**, Monday to Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm or email Ich.pet@nhs.net

Contact us

Name of service

2/F Stockdale House
Headingley Office Park
Victoria Road
Leeds LS6 1PF
Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm
Tel: 0113 84 30730

We can make this information available in Braille, large print, audio or other languages on request.



**Leeds Community
Healthcare**
NHS Trust

Chilblains



www.leedscommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk

What are chilblains?

Chilblains are small areas of inflamed and often, itchy, skin which develop on fingers and toes. They generally affect the young and old and are caused when blood vessels don't react normally to cold, damp weather.

Chilblains can be uncomfortable and can become infected if the inflamed skins tears. If people with chilblains protect their fingers and toes from the cold, they will heal within a few weeks.

Look after yourself

- Family history – chilblains are often a family trait
- Poor circulation or general health.
- Work-related – people working in cold and damp conditions.
- Smoking - nicotine narrows blood vessels.
- Damaged feet - chilblains can appear on a bunion or a toe that's squeezed by tight shoes.

Prevent

- Warm your cold feet up slowly, don't put your feet in hot water, near direct heat from fires or radiators or use very hot water bottles and wheat bags.
- Improve your circulation through gentle exercise and massage
- Use thermal insoles in shoes and boots
- Stop smoking – nicotine narrows your blood vessels
- Wear warm clothes and protect your hands, feet and legs from the cold.

- Warm your hands before you go out by soaking them in warm (not hot) water for several minutes and then drying them thoroughly. Wear cotton-lined waterproof gloves if necessary.
- If you have diabetes, regularly check your feet or ask someone to do this. You may not be able to feel your feet and could have infected chilblains without noticing it.

When to seek professional advice

You should seek medical advice if you think your chilblain may have become infected. Signs of infection may include swelling or pus forming in the affected area, swollen glands, feeling generally unwell and a high temperature of 38C or above.

Further information: www.scpod.org