

# RADIOLOGY QUIZ

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## PROBLEM



➤ A 57-year-old woman presents to your urgent care center complaining of pain and decreased range of motion in her left great toe. She denies trauma or injury to the area and states that the symptoms have worsened over the last two months. What is your interpretation of these views of her foot?

Turn page for answer ➤

## ANSWER



➤ These radiographs reveal hallux rigidus of the left great toe. Hallux rigidus affects the metatarsal phalangeal joint of the first digit and usually presents with pain and stiffness. Approximately 2% of the population between 30 and 60 years old has this condition. Pain while walking, especially during the swing-through of the foot when the toe is extending, is common. Radiographic evaluation, which is necessary to confirm this diagnosis, will find joint space narrowing at the metatarsal phalangeal joint of the first digit, accompanied by osteophyte formation. Footwear may contribute to hallux rigidus joint pain by pressing on the dorsal sensory nerves overlying the osteophyte formation.

Treatment in this case involved nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medication, the use of a hard-soled shoe, and referral to an orthopedic surgeon. Referrals are especially important in these cases because more than 90% of patients who undergo surgery for hallux rigidus have less pain and increased mobility.

### SUGGESTED READING

Griffin LY (ed): *Essentials of Musculoskeletal Care*, 3rd ed. American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, 2005, p. 645.

Skinner H: *Current Diagnosis and Treatment Orthopedics*, 4th ed. McGraw-Hill, 2006, p. 474.

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