

Podoconiosis cause, prevention and disease management

What is podoconiosis?

Non-infectious elephantiasis caused by long-term exposure of bare feet to irritant soil.

Clinical Features of Podoconiosis



Below knee swelling, on foot or leg; knobs or bumps present above or below the ankle. Disease is bilateral but asymmetrical.

Podoconiosis prevention is simple!

Podoconiosis is preventable by avoiding contact with irritant soil which is done primarily by

- Keeping good foot hygiene (washing with soap and water);
- Wearing clean socks and shoes daily; and
- Covering floor in the home to avoid contact with irritant soil.

Basic Disease Management Package

- Foot hygiene and skin care
- Bandaging
- Footwear
- Elevation and movement
- Minor surgery to remove nodules
- Acute attack management

Foot Hygiene and Skin Care

- Wash feet in clean, cool water with soap.
- Lather soap onto hands, clean leg from top to bottom.
- Rinse soap with clean water.
- Air dry leg and feet carefully.
- Keep skin soft and flexible by rubbing a small amount of Whitfield ointment, Vaseline, or local oil onto skin of lower leg after washing and air drying.



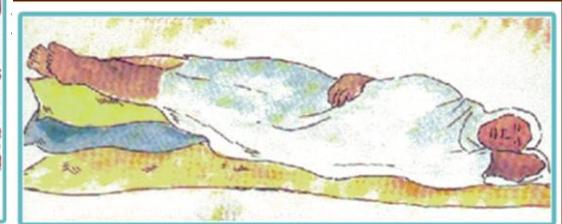
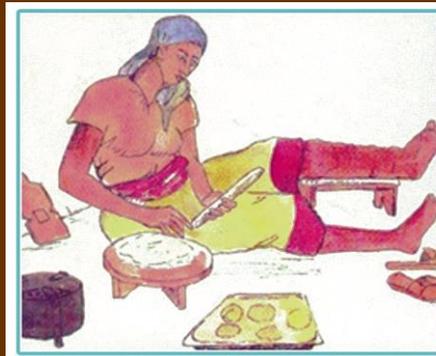
Bandaging

- Bandage from toe to knee using “V” shape over foot and use spiral up lower leg; overlap 50% when bandaging.
- Patients should learn how to use bandages themselves.
- Two bandages should be used per affected leg.



Elevation and Movement

- It helps to improve lymph circulation and reduce swelling.
- Ankle circles are done when sitting by raising the leg and rotating the foot in a circular motion while pointing the toes.
- The foot and leg have to be elevated while sitting and sleeping.



Footwear	Acute Attack Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shoes are vital for treatment as well as prevention! Patients can be trained as shoemakers. Clean socks (2 pairs) and large size/custom made shoes are needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early detection. Hygiene. Elevation and complete rest to the legs. Use cold application. Treat headache, pain and fever. Drink plenty of fluids. Avoid hot application, exercise, and bandaging. Referral if patient has no relief.
<h3>Surgery</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surgery is not commonly used for podoconiosis treatment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor surgery is only done to remove nodules that prevent patients from wearing shoes.

Simple Disease Management is Effective		Other possible causes of foot swelling
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Filarial lymphoedema Onchocerciasis Leprosy Malnutrition (children) Rheumatic heart disease Post surgery
		

Podoconiosis Clinical Disease Staging

Stage 1 Swelling is reversible overnight	
Stage 2 Persistent below-knee swelling; if present, knobs or bumps are below the ankle ONLY	 A photograph of a person's foot showing persistent swelling below the knee. The skin is thickened and has a mottled appearance. A pink starburst with the number '2' is overlaid on the image.
Stage 3 Persistent below-knee swelling; knobs or bumps present above the ankle	 A photograph of a person's foot showing persistent swelling below the knee. There are visible knobs or bumps on the skin above the ankle. A pink starburst with the number '3' is overlaid on the image.
Stage 4 Persistent above-knee swelling; knobs or bumps present at any location	 A photograph of a person's legs showing persistent swelling above the knee. There are visible knobs or bumps on the skin. A pink starburst with the number '4' is overlaid on the image.
Stage 5 Joint fixation; swelling at any place in the foot or leg	 A photograph of a person's feet showing joint fixation and swelling at any place in the foot or leg. The skin is severely thickened and discolored. A pink starburst with the number '5' is overlaid on the image.