# Lesser-known foot symptoms of cardiovascular disease to watch out for



Experts have issued warnings regarding lesser-known symptoms of cardiovascular disease that could manifest in the feet, emphasising the importance of recognising these signs for timely treatment. Cardiovascular disease remains a leading cause of mortality in the UK and globally, with nearly 18 million deaths attributed to it each year, encompassing conditions that affect the heart and circulatory system such as strokes, coronary heart disease, and heart failure.

The American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) has identified three specific symptoms that individuals should be vigilant about, as they may indicate potential heart issues: painful lumps on the toes, swelling in the feet, and blue toes.

Painful lumps on the toes, known as Osler nodes, can occur in the context of a heart infection called infective endocarditis. The AAD notes that these lumps may develop in both the fingers and toes, lasting from a few hours to several days. While the lumps may resolve independently, underlying infections require medical attention and can often be treated effectively with antibiotics. In some cases, surgical intervention may also be necessary.

Swelling in the feet, referred to medically as oedema, can signify that the heart is not functioning properly. According to the AAD, various heart diseases can cause fluid to accumulate in the feet, ankles, and legs, resulting in visible swelling that may worsen as the day progresses, contrasting with a potential reduction in symptoms in the morning.

Another alarming symptom to be aware of is the presence of blue toes, which may indicate a blockage in a blood vessel. The AAD explains that if an area of skin appears blue or purple when the body is warm, it signals insufficient oxygenation of the blood. This condition, known as blue toe syndrome, can lead to serious complications if not addressed, as prolonged lack of oxygen may result in tissue death.

Commonly recognized symptoms of heart disease include chest pain, shortness of breath, discomfort in the neck, shoulders, jaw, or arms, feelings of faintness, and nausea. Individuals experiencing any of these symptoms are advised to consult their GP, while those with sudden or severe symptoms should seek urgent medical assistance by calling emergency services or visiting the nearest accident and emergency department.

The information highlights the critical importance of awareness regarding these uncommon symptoms, as early detection and treatment can be vital in preventing severe health consequences.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.cornerstonefootandankle.com/blog/the-foot-and-heart-health-connection-peripheral-arterial-disease.cfm> - This resource supports the connection between heart health and symptoms observed in the feet, such as cold feet, numbness, and swelling, which can indicate peripheral arterial disease. It emphasizes the importance of foot health in diagnosing heart-related conditions.
2. <https://healthmatters.wphospital.org/blogs/heart-disease-and-your-feet/> - This article highlights the connection between heart disease and foot symptoms, noting signs like absent hair growth, dry skin, and changes in toenails as indicators of possible heart issues. It also mentions the risk factors for peripheral arterial disease, which aligns with cardiovascular disease symptoms.
3. <https://balancehealth.com/resources/how-are-heart-disease-and-foot-pain-related/advanced-foot-and-ankle-center/> - This piece explains how heart conditions, particularly peripheral arterial disease, can manifest in foot pain and other symptoms like cold, numb feet and slow-healing wounds. It underscores the importance of screening for these conditions to prevent severe complications.
4. <https://www.aad.org/public/diseases/infectious/endocarditis> - This resource from the American Academy of Dermatology provides information on infective endocarditis, which can cause painful lumps known as Osler nodes on the toes, further supporting the connection between heart infections and foot symptoms.
5. <https://www.bhf.org.uk/informationsupport/heart-matters-magazine/medical/my-heart-isnt-working-properly> - This article from the British Heart Foundation discusses signs of heart failure or dysfunction, including swelling in the feet and ankles, which aligns with the warning about oedema as a potential indicator of heart issues.
6. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/cardiovascular-diseases-(cvds)> - This World Health Organization page provides an overview of cardiovascular diseases, highlighting them as a leading cause of death globally and emphasizing the importance of recognizing various symptoms to ensure timely treatment.
7. <https://www.bristolpost.co.uk/news/health/heart-disease-symptoms-could-appear-10097011> - Please view link - unable to able to access data