

Surgery for an in-growing toenail

Surgery to remove an edge of the nail and stop it growing is performed as an out-patient. This means that you do not need to be admitted to a bed. The procedure is usually performed under local anaesthetic. The procedure takes 20 minutes and is successful in 95% of cases.

Risks

All surgery carries potential risks. The risks are minimised by having the surgery meticulously performed by an expert in foot and ankle surgery. Risks include

Pain, swelling, and bruising - will occur to some degree following all foot and ankle surgery

Infection - approximately 2% in our unit

Blood clots (thrombosis) - treatment to reduce this risk will be provided if required

Numbness - usually improves over time

Stiffness - this improves over time and helped by physiotherapy

Scar sensitivity - can be improved with scar massage

Nail re-growth - there is a risk that a small section of nail can re-grow causing pain (this can be removed if required)

Discharge advice following in-growing toe-nail surgery

Dressings

Your foot has been dressed with a wool and crepe bandage. This dressing should be changed by your GP practice nurse in 2 days time and then as necessary. The practice nurse will advise you about this. At this point you should start salt water soaks.

Elevation

It is very important that you rest as much as possible and keep your foot elevated for the first 48 hours after surgery. Try to avoid letting it hang down when sitting as this will lead to swelling and pain. This is most apparent within the first 2 weeks but swelling may occur for up to 6 months after surgery, especially after sitting or standing for long periods. In bed, put the foot on a pillow.

Analgesia

You will receive a prescription for pain medication on discharge. Pain is often due to swelling, and this is eased by rest and elevation of the foot.

Walking

You may walk on the foot in whatever way is comfortable.

Follow-up

You will be reviewed approximately 2 weeks after surgery. If you have had an operation to stop the nail growing rather than just having the nail removed it is common for there to be a slow discharge from the nail bed which may last for several weeks and this is normal.

Driving

You should not drive a manual car for 1 week after surgery. After this you should start gradually to see if you are comfortable. It normally takes a few days to feel confident. If you have an automatic car and have only had the left foot operated upon then you may drive after 2 days.

Work

If you have an office based job then you should be able to return after 2 days. If you have a more physical job then it may take 2 weeks.

For more information please contact us:

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or visit www.bfaclinic.co.uk