

Patient Information Leaflet

Nail surgery

Please note that due to infection control ONLY the patient is allowed in the minor op room unless patient is a child/ special needs

This leaflet aims to answer your questions about nail surgery including the benefits, risks and alternatives. It also explains what you can expect when you have nail surgery including before, during, and after the procedure. If you have any further questions, please speak to the podiatrist caring for you.

What is nail surgery?

Nail surgery is a routine minor procedure, undertaken under local anaesthetic, to relieve discomfort from ingrown and painful toenails. This is done by removing the offending section, or sometimes the whole toenail and treating the root to prevent it from growing back.

Why should I have nail surgery?

Thick, distorted or ingrown nails may give rise to pain and sometimes infection. Treatment in the clinic may relieve the symptoms for a while, but they often reoccur once the nail starts to regrow. Nail surgery generally provides a permanent and safe answer to painful ingrown toenails.

What are the risks?

There are a few risks you should be aware of before you have nail surgery.

Re-growth: occasionally the removed section of nail may regrow and need to be removed again.

Bleeding: uncommon- but may require a more extensive procedure to control; occasionally an emergency referral to a specialist would have to be made

Infection of the site during healing may occur, as with any operation. Occasionally, antibiotics may be required.

Pain: it is normal to have some mild pain or soreness once the anaesthetic has worn off. It is unusual for this to be severe or to last longer than 24 hours.

Choice of procedure: This may change depending on the presentation on the day or progress in surgery

Very rarely: in some extremely rare cases, temporary or permanent painful nerve damage could occur or you could have a severe allergic reaction to the local anaesthetic.

How can I prepare for nail surgery?

You should arrange to have the day of your surgery off work or school so that you can rest at home afterwards. You can resume normal activities the following day but should avoid swimming or impact sports, for example football, until your toe is fully healed (approximately four to six weeks). You should not drive a car on the day of the surgery. It is not advisable to take public transport or walk home as this can increase bleeding. We recommend that you organise a taxi or for someone to take you home afterwards. Your nail surgery appointment will last approximately one hour.

On the day of the nail surgery

- ? You should eat and drink as usual before the procedure.
- ? Take all your medications as normal (unless you have been advised otherwise).
- ? Please bring a list of all your medications with you.
- ? The dressing is bulky so bring open-toe footwear, such as flip-flops, to wear afterwards. ? You are welcome to have someone accompany you on the day.

Please note that if you

are under 16 years of age you will need to be accompanied by your parent or legal guardian, who will be asked to sign consent on your behalf.

Giving your consent (permission)

We want to involve you in decisions about your care and treatment. If you decide to go ahead, you will be asked to sign a consent form. This states that you agree to have the treatment and you understand what it involves.

What happens during nail surgery?

The affected toe is injected with a local anaesthetic to prevent you feeling any pain during the procedure. Once the toe is completely numb, a tight rubber band (tourniquet) maybe placed around the affected toe to prevent bleeding. The offending portion of toenail is then loosened and removed before a liquid chemical (phenol) is applied to the nail root. The tourniquet is then removed and a bulky dressing is applied. Normal feeling will return two to three hours after your procedure.

Going home after nail surgery

- ? Please take a taxi or arrange for someone to take you home. You should not drive a car. ? Be careful until normal feeling returns as you could injure your toe without realising.

*****Please do not drive following the procedure*****

- ? Do not remove the dressing yourself and keep it dry until your re-dressing appointment.

Bleeding: Once home, remove your footwear and rest with your legs elevated for two to three hours. This reduces the likelihood of bleeding. You should then try and rest as

much as possible for the remainder of the day. It is normal for spots of blood to sometimes appear through the dressing. Do not worry, this will dry. You can apply a further dressing over the top if you wish. **Pain:** If you experience any discomfort after the anaesthetic has worn off (usually within two to three hours), take the same painkiller you would take for a headache, such as paracetamol.

Re-dressing appointment

A re-dressing appointment is sometimes booked one to four days after your nail surgery. If this has not been booked then you should attend one of our emergency podiatry clinics (for details see list below). At this appointment your podiatrist will apply a smaller dressing and advise you how to look after your toe until it is fully healed. You can wear your normal footwear again following this appointment. Please continue to re-dress your toe as instructed until it is fully healed (usually four to six weeks). You will not normally need any further appointments unless we have any concerns.

Emergencies

In case of profuse bleeding that does not respond to the instructions given, or any other difficulty after the procedure such as severe pain or infection, you should contact the clinic. If you have concerns outside of these hours then please attend your local Emergency Department (A&E), taking this information sheet with you.