

# THE FOOT AND ANKLE CENTRE

## TOE DEFORMITIES

### **What are the alternatives to surgery for problem toes?**

Toes which have become “bent” often give rise to pain especially over the prominent joints which can rub on shoes. Surgery is only one option for treatment. Padding, finding more comfortable shoes and Chiropody treatment are alternative treatments.

### **If I decide to have an operation what are my options for an anaesthetic?**

For most people a local anaesthetic is a good option for toe surgery. Sometimes if people are anxious we may advise some sedation in addition to the local anaesthetic.

### **What are the aims of surgery?**

The goal of an operation is to provide relief of pain. To this we usually need to straighten your toe(s) so that there is less rubbing against shoes. The exact aims of surgery will depend on the complexity of your problems but this will be clearly explained to you before your operation. Sometimes a temporary wire is used to stabilise the toe during the post operative period – this may be left in place for between 2 – 3 weeks and will be removed in clinic.

### **Tell me about the operation**

The operation is done as a “Day Case” procedure. This means you will go home the same day as your operation. Most toe surgery takes between 15-30 minutes although you will be on the unit for between 2 - 3 hours in total. You will be provided with a post-operative shoe and all the instructions on the day of your operation.

### **Will I have stitches in my toe?**

Yes you will have stitches and these are usually removed by the Podiatrist at between 10 – 14 days after your operation. This is not normally painful.

### **Do I have to rest after my operation?**

Yes you must rest with leg elevated after your operation. Driving and working are not permitted as you will damage the toes that have been operated on. You will receive detailed advice specific to your recovery on the day of your operation.

## Will I be in plaster after my operation?

Plaster is not usually required after toe surgery unless you have had to have a very complex operation. We would tell you in advance if this was planned.

## Is toe surgery always successful?

No, it is true to say that no operation is always successful. The Foot and Ankle Centre routinely audits all patients before and after surgery. We know that more than 90% of patients are pleased with the result of their operation.

## What are the risks of surgery?

Unfortunately most things in life carry an element of risk and this is true of surgery. When we think of risks we should think about how likely a problem occurs and also how serious the problem might be.

I have set out below some of the risks and an estimate as to how often they might occur. If you have any concerns please speak to one of the clinical staff. We are always happy to re-explain something to our patients. Our goal is to provide the highest possible care and part of that means being happy to answer your questions.

## General risks of surgery

Infection	<2.5%	Loss of sensation around area	<5%
Scar sensitivity	<5%	Swelling	5%
Blood clots	<1%	Recurrence of original problem	5%
Excessive postoperative pain	<5%	Medication side-effects	<5%

## Risks of surgery specific to this toe surgery

Stiffness of the toe	<5%	Toe swelling	<5%
Loss of blood supply to the toe	<1%	Loss of toe	<1%