



Hallux Valgus/Bunion Management

What is Hallux Valgus deformity?

You have been diagnosed with Hallux Valgus deformity, more commonly referred to as a bunion. This is a deformity of the big toe, where the joint becomes prominent on the inside of the foot. This prominence often becomes inflamed and rubs on footwear. Sometimes joint movement is painful when walking. Bunions can be an inherited problem, but there are many possible causes including abnormal foot function and diseases of the joints such as arthritis. Shoes with a narrow toe box precipitate the problem. Bunions are known to get larger over time.

How is the diagnosis made?

Clinical examination and a detailed history allow diagnosis. X-rays help to evaluate the extent of deformity and degree of arthritis if present.

What are the treatment options?

Non-surgical treatment

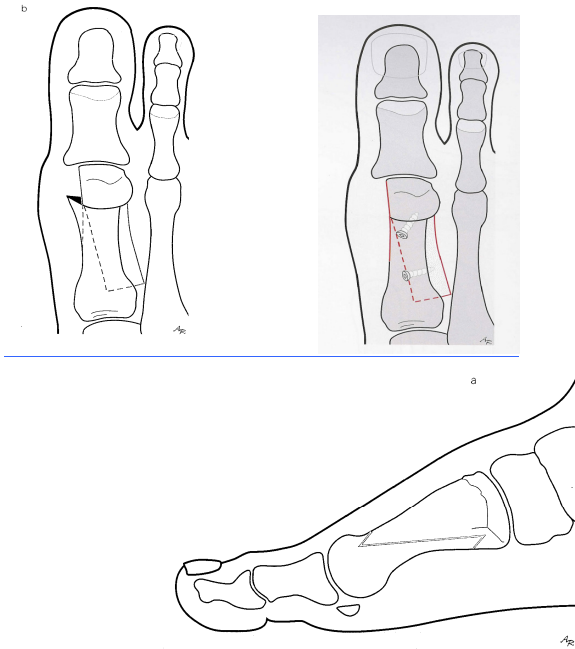
There are several treatments that may reduce or relieve your symptoms:

- 1) Good fitting footwear/avoid high heels
- 2) Padding
- 3) Night splints
- 4) Insoles/orthoses

Surgical treatment

If non-surgical treatment fails to relieve your symptoms, the only effective way of correcting the deformity is to have an operation. This involves straightening the bunion and this procedure can be carried out in the Day Surgery Unit under local anaesthetic.

An incision is made on the inside of the foot. The metatarsal is cut, re-aligned and secured in a corrected position with screws. If required the proximal phalanx bone in the big toe is also cut and re-aligned. An absorbable suture is used to close the skin. The operation takes about 45 minutes.



The Scarf Osteotomy

How long would this restrict my activities?

Two weeks after surgery, the suture tags are cut and you can then bathe and swim. You will need to return to thick-soled lace up shoe or trainers at this stage to help reduce swelling and protect the bones while they heal. You can drive when you feel confident enough to perform an emergency stop. Participate in impact sports is fine if everything is all right at your three-month review appointment. It is normal for people to have four to six weeks off work for this type of operation.

Are there any complications associated with the operation?

Specific complications of bunion surgery include:

- Recurrence of deformity.
- Malalignment.
- Joint stiffness
- Transfer pain or skin lesion
- Fracture
- Non-union of bone

General Complications of foot surgery include:

- Prolonged swelling
- Continued pain
- Infection
- Blood clot

- Delayed healing
- Thickened scarring
- Screw or pin movement
- A chronic pain syndrome
- Further surgery may be required

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