



The Foot Surgery Centre – Total Foot Care Solutions

## General Advice/ Expected Milestones

### The Day of Your Foot Operation

- Please wash your feet thoroughly and **remove nail varnish**
- Eat normally prior to your operation unless you are going to sleep (general anaesthetic) or having sedation.
- Bring a personal stereo or book, to help you relax during the operation
- Wear clothing with wide legs which you can get over your bandage.
- Bring shorts to wear under your hospital gown if you wish
- Take all your tablets as normal - bring asthma or angina medication with you.
- Please be on time.
- Operations last 30 –90 minutes depending on the complexity. However, you will be in The Day Surgery Unit for half a day.
- You must have transport home and a friend or relative to accompany you. The train/bus is not appropriate.
- You will be given a post-operative shoe to wear, painkillers and crutches to use if necessary.

### 0-7 Days After Your Operation

Keep your leg elevated as much as possible to help minimise swelling and pain. Only walk to the toilet and back, always using your crutches.

Take your painkillers at regular intervals, starting before the anaesthetic wears off. If you do not have any pain, it is advisable to take the anti-inflammatory tablets anyway as they decrease swelling. The use of ice is highly recommended. A bag of frozen peas wrapped in a tea towel can be placed behind the knee.

To decrease the risk of DVT or blood clot formation:

- 1) Keep well hydrated, avoid alcohol consumption.
- 2) Avoid smoking (which also impairs bone healing).  
Promote blood flow by:
- 3) Rotating the ankle and bending the knee regularly.
- 4) Keeping the tubigrip up to knee level.
- 5) Walking to the toilet and back.

Keep the dressing dry and in place, if you get it wet, you risk infection and tissue loss. Climbing in and out of the bath may result in a fall and displacement or fracture of bones at the operation site.

**Do not walk if you have a plaster cast or have been advised not to.**

### Emergencies

- 1) Unbearable pain - It is impossible to predict how much pain you will experience. Pain is minimised by following our instructions and most patients experience a significant reduction in symptoms after 24 hours. If the painkillers do not control your pain, please use the emergency numbers provided.
- 2) Tight bandages – constant tingling or pins and needles/blue toes.
- 3) Calf swelling and pain
- 4) Flu-like symptoms
- 5) Abnormal shortness of breath and/or chest pain.

### **Emergency Numbers**

**9-5pm Private Secretary, Louise Cox - 020 8846 1479**  
**Mr E.A. Barlow-Kearsley 07904 245472**

### 5-7 Days - First Redressing

Your dressing will be changed and the wound inspected.

If you have had bone surgery, with the use of pins, screws or plates, you may be sent for an x-ray, which will be checked by a member of the surgery team.

You will be allowed to increase your activity, but it is still sensible to elevate your leg regularly. If you still need painkillers, you could be overdoing it!

### 10-14 Days - Second Redressing (21 Days for stitches under the foot)

Your stitches will be removed or the knots trimmed if they are absorbable. Massage your scar with vitamin E oil or cream to improve its appearance. You can bathe again and swim.

Daily exercises for joint mobilisation and tendon strengthening may be given. These may be painful but they are essential to prevent joint stiffness.

At this stage we encourage most patients to return to a thick soled trainer or supportive lace-up shoe for 6 weeks. This protects the foot while it continues to heal and helps decrease swelling.

If you have had a lump removed, the pathology result will be discussed.

## Other Useful Information

### ***“When can I return to work?”***

Generally patients return to work between 3-6 weeks depending on the type of job, activity levels and response to surgery. Medical Leave Certificates should be obtained from your general practitioner, who will have been informed about your operation by letter.

### ***“When can I drive again?”***

When you feel able to perform an emergency stop! After bone surgery, this is generally between 4-8 weeks post-operatively.

### ***“When can I return to Sport?”***

Although the healing process continues for up to 1 year, you should be able to return to impact activity at 3 months. This will vary according to the type of operation you have had and your response to surgery.

## Four to Six Week Review Appointment

Some patients are reviewed at this stage for the removal of external wires (K-wires) or casts.

You may also be reviewed if you are having problems performing your exercises and require a referral to a physiotherapist or walking re-education.

## Three Month Review Appointment

At this stage, we would expect you to be largely pain free and have returned to the majority of your daily activities and footwear. You may find that some swelling remains at the surgical site, which is normal and can remain for up to 1 year in some cases.

Impact sports can be resumed.

We usually discharge patients at this appointment.