

Instructions for Foot & Ankle Surgery

(Please bring this form with you on the day of your surgery)

The following general instructions apply to preparation for and recovery from foot & ankle surgery.

BEFORE SURGERY

- On the morning of surgery please shower and thoroughly wash your feet and toes with soap (anti-bacterial if available) and water. Please remove make up and nail polish.
- Fast from the time instructed (unless if your procedure is performed under local anaesthetic)
- Mr. Amir & the anaesthetist will advise you on your medications that you should NOT take prior to your surgery. Unless advised, continue to take your normal medications (e.g., blood pressure tablets) with a small sip of water on the day of surgery.
- Attend the hospital at the advised time (REMEMBER to bring your X-rays/ SCANS please) – there may be some waiting time before your surgery, but you need to arrive on time so that you can be checked in by the nursing staff and be seen by the anaesthetist beforehand. Please bring a book, magazine, or music in case of a moderate wait or delay.
- You must make arrangements for a responsible adult to take you home after your surgery. It is strongly suggested that you have someone stay with you during the first 24 hours or until you are able to get around safely.
- Wear loose fitting clothes that are easy to put on and will fit over bulky bandages or surgical dressings. Leave any jewelry and valuables at home.

SURGERY

Surgery will generally be performed under general anaesthesia. Sometimes toe/ forefoot surgery can be performed under local anaesthetic with or without some light sedation.

- Local anaesthetic will often be used as a 'block' into your foot to numb the area for pain relief after surgery. It will usually last between 6 to 24 hours depending on the type of 'block'. After this regular pain medication will be required.

AFTER SURGERY/ RECOVERY

- Plan to rest after surgery to minimise bleeding and swelling.
- Have someone who is responsible available to take you home, as you will not be allowed to drive.
- Once you arrive home wait until you are hungry before eating. Begin with a light meal such as a sandwich/fruit/tea/coffee or juice. A heavy meal can cause nausea and vomiting after an operation.
- Take your medication for pain as directed.
 - Panadeine forte (500mg Paracetamol + 30mg Codeine) with Ibuprofen or Diclofenac (both non-steroidal anti-inflammatories) are usually prescribed. If these medications are not suitable for you, alternative pain medication will be prescribed. These should be taken regularly for the first 72 hours and then 'weaned' off and taken as required.
 - Other medications including antibiotics may also be prescribed.
 - Possible side effects of pain medication include drowsiness, nausea and constipation.
- Please leave your bandages intact until reviewed by Mr Amir at the post-operative visit. A plastic garbage bag/ kitchen bag sealed with tape and elastic band is needed to keep it dry in the shower.
- You will be given a post-operative (protective shoe) which you should wear at all times. The shoe can also be worn to bed if required.
- Rest and elevation of your foot is required for the first 7-14 days following surgery. This helps minimise swelling and aids healing of your wounds. Place your operated leg(s) on two pillows or a bean bag so that it is above the level of your hip when you are lying down. The use of ice packs (or frozen peas, beans etc.) can be a very effective way of reducing swelling. Place the ice pack in a towel over the ankle or foot for 20 minutes 3-4 times per day.
- Gentle leg, ankle, foot and toe movement and stretching (if possible and not in plaster) every hour will help with circulation and muscle recovery.
- If you have been instructed to be 'non-weight bearing' this is to allow best healing of bones/ tendons/ ligaments. Failure to comply may jeopardise the results of your surgery.
- Time off work and recovery will depend on the nature of your surgery and type of work performed (e.g., seated vs. standing).
- A post-operative appointment will be made 1 week after surgery for removal of the bandage and to check the healing process. The foot will be redressed and the next follow up will usually be made in another 2 weeks.
- If physiotherapy is required this will be discussed at your follow up appointment.

POST-OPERATIVE PROBLEMS

If after reading and following the post-operative instructions you are experiencing any of the following problems please call the office or mobile (see last page for mobile numbers).

Infection

- Wounds feel hot and tender.
- Unusual discharge from your wound or dressings or an odour from your dressings.
- Fever may be present and a general feeling of unwell.

Swelling

- Swelling is not reduced with elevation of the leg.
- A change in colour of your toes or coldness.
- The calf muscle in your lower leg of the treated foot swells or is painful.

Bleeding

- Your dressings are showing excessive amount of fresh blood.
- Elevation and application of pressure dressings doesn't stop the bleeding.

Pain

- The medication that has been prescribed for you is not helping control the pain while you have been resting with your limb elevated.

Dressing

- If at any time the dressings feel too tight as if cutting off the circulation.
- If you cannot get advice then the outer dressing only may be released.

Medication

- You are experiencing ill effects due to the medication that has been prescribed for pain e.g., Nausea, vomiting, gastric discomfort.

For Pain – Take the prescribed medication. If you experience nausea stop taking the medication. Eating before taking pain medication generally reduces nausea.

Your pain medication is: _____

Other medication: _____

Your Next Appointment: _____

Notes

Contact Details:

- Ozan Amir (Podiatric Surgeon) – mob 0401 885 445
- Abdel Kak (Registrar) – mob 0403 729 967
- Jeff Jenkins (Registrar) – mob 0433 444 769