

Nail surgery dressing advice

Information for patients and carers



Dressing regime

- It is important to keep your foot dry **except** when changing dressings
- Bath or shower every 2nd day **with the dressing in place** or daily if there is excessive foot perspiration
- Remove dressings after your bath/shower
- Add four tablespoons of table salt to a basin of warm (not hot) water and soak your foot for no more than 5 minutes. A separate basin for each foot should be used if surgery has been carried out on both feet
- Dry your foot with a clean towel **taking care not to touch the toe(s)** to be dressed
- In the first week after your surgery, allow 5 -10 minutes for the toe(s) to dry before applying a dressing
- 7 days after your procedure, the dressing can be left off with the foot **elevated** for a couple of hours after the salt footbath and before applying the dressing. It is important at this stage that you **do not** stop dressing the wound
- Apply the adhesive, non-adherent dressing and, if required, secure with extra adhesive tape
- Repeat the above procedure daily or every 2 days as recommended by your clinician. You should receive 25 dressings per toe-nail surgery for your use. If necessary you can purchase additional items and staff can advise you about this
- It is essential that footwear with plenty of room for your toes is worn following nail surgery. This is because pressure from tight footwear can delay the healing process
- Avoid running, strenuous exercise and swimming during the healing process.

Questions

How long will my toe take to heal?

Healing times vary from person to person. If you have had a complete nail removed, it will usually take around 8 weeks. If your nail has only been partially removed it will take around 6 weeks to heal.

My toe is bright red, hot, shiny, painful, and has a strong odour- what should I do?

You may have an infection in the wound area, contact the telephone number on this leaflet and a member from the nail surgery team can assess the area. If it is infected, they will arrange an appointment for you in one of our nail surgery clinics.

I have noticed discharge coming through my dressing, is this normal?

With total nail removal, it is quite normal for this. This is due to the action of the phenol applied to prevent re-growth. Continue with the salt foot baths and then apply a dry sterile dressing as shown at your initial dressing appointment.

It is normal for your toe to appear slightly red and puffy, with moderate discharge from the wound until it has healed. The area will begin to dry up after 5-6 weeks, when a dark scab will begin to form. The wound area is expected to have healed around 8 weeks after surgery. Do not remove the scab- let this come away naturally.

If you have any concerns during the healing process please do not hesitate to contact the nail surgery team using the telephone number on the back of this leaflet.

Points to note:

- Wash your hands thoroughly before removing a dressing and before applying a new dressing
- Do not compromise the area by direct touch or interference
- The wound may drain, and many patients can notice significant leakage during the healing process
- Do not wear nail polish until the area has healed as it can hide bacteria, increasing the chances of an infection
- Antibiotics are not recommended for minor operations. Wound infections can be treated successfully if diagnosed early. If you have any concerns, contact a member of your nail surgery team on the telephone number below
- Follow all written and verbal advice given to you in order to encourage healing and to reduce the chances of complications after your surgery.

If you have any concerns about your wound healing, please contact the telephone number below and ask to speak with a member of the nail surgery team.

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