

Nail Surgery

Nail surgery is the procedure of choice when conservative methods have failed to remedy an ingrowing toe nail.

Options available;

- Partial Nail Avulsion (PNA) involves removing only the problematic portion of nail.
- Total Nail Avulsion (TNA) involves removing the entire nail.

With both of the above options you can choose or will be advised to either have Phenol applied to the nail base to prevent regrowth or you may choose or be advised not to have the Phenol applied so that the nail can regrow (Phenol is a chemical that prevents nail regrowth).

Nail surgery requires the use of a Local Anaesthetic (LA), LA is administered by two injections to the base of the toe, the LA takes approximately 3-5 minutes to begin working and lasts for 1 hour. The LA removes any discomfort associated with the procedure.

A tourniquet is then applied to prevent bleeding and allow the troublesome portion of nail to be removed. Phenol is then applied to the nail bed and is successful in over 90% of procedures. Once completed, the tourniquet is removed and a large dressing is applied.

Post-operative advice will be given and you will be required to return for a redressing appointment the next day, where the redressing and cleansing procedure will be explained and demonstrated.

The nail surgery appointment should last approximately one hour with the actual procedure lasting less than 20 minutes per toe.

On the day of surgery, you will have to arrange transport as you will not be insured to drive with an anaesthetised toe. Please bring open toe adjustable or shower type sandals that will accommodate a large dressing.

You will need to rest totally with your feet elevated for the first 24 hours after surgery. You can eat on the day of surgery but please do not consume alcohol before or after surgery.

As the LA wears off you may feel discomfort in the toe, you may take your usual painkiller at the prescribed dosage for a headache but you must avoid Aspirin based painkillers.

You will be required to change the dressings between appointments, the redressing appointments will be at 2 and 4 weeks after the procedure, this allows progress to be monitored. It takes on average 6-8 weeks for the wounds to heal completely.

Risk factors

All operations carry some risk, the risks associated with the aforementioned procedures include possible post-operative infection, possible nail regrowth and in very rare cases an anaphylactic reaction to the Local Anaesthetic.

The above procedure will have been discussed at the pre-operative consultation and will be explained again on the day of the procedure. Prior to the procedure you will also be asked to complete the consent form, you should only sign if you are completely comfortable with the explanations offered. If at any time you are unsure or concerned, please do not hesitate to ask.