

Birmingham Foot Clinic Advice Guide Nail phenolisation surgery / Ingrown toenail



Mild ingrowing nail

Severe ingrowing nail

Involved nail (mild)

Involved nail (mild)

Onchogryphosis
(Thickened deformed)



Phenol used in nail edge

Standard Toe Dressing

Side of nail healed

Total Nail
Excision healed

About Your Operation

Ingrown toenails are often caused by injury or poor nail cutting. They are often associated with increased cross sectional curvature (involution) of the nail plate, which causes the nail edges to press into the flesh more easily. Very often the edge of the nail can be removed and prevented from regrowing by excising the section of tissue containing the nail matrix.

Problems / Risks Associated with Incisional Nail Surgery

- Delayed Healing (longer than the average 4 to 6 weeks daily dressings needed)
- Areas of numbness - may reduce over 12 months
- Infection (sudden increase in pain and swelling at 2 to 3 days after surgery - or later)
- Recurrence

The surgery

The procedure that you are about to have is called a nail ablation. It is recognised as one of the most effective lines of treatment for ingrown or troublesome nails. You will be awake throughout the procedure, however you will not feel any discomfort as you will have received an effective local anaesthetic block.

Prior to surgery

On the morning before the procedure you can eat and drink normally unless you are having sedation or a general anaesthetic (refer to separate advice sheet), as local anaesthetics have no effect on your digestive system. If you have been ill or prescribed any new medication from a Doctor or Dentist following your initial assessment at the Hospital, please inform a member of staff on the day you attend for surgery.

It will be necessary to arrange for a lift home following the procedure as it is not advisable to drive for the rest of the day. Also bring a pair of sandals or slippers to accommodate the large dressing that you will have on your toe for the first 3 - 5 days.

Following the surgery

Directly following the surgery it is important to get home and be able to rest. To reduce discomfort you should keep your leg raised and take it easy for the rest of the day. Should you experience discomfort you can take your usual headache tablet as directed on the packet, and if persistent a bag of frozen peas rapped in a towel can be place over the ankle for 10 minutes per hour.

It is also important to keep the dressing dry until you attend for your first re-dressing. Once this has been carried out you will be taught how to care for your toe until healing has completed. However you will not be discharged from our care until we are happy that the area is fully healed and you are happy with the result.

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