

Ingrown Toenail Repair

This is a painful condition usually affecting the big toe. The nail edge grows into skin at the nail edge. This can then become infected. The nail fold can be very painful, smelly and there sometimes can be a discharge of pus if infected.

Ingrown toenails can be caused by:

- Wearing shoes that are tight over toes
- Cutting toenails too short or not straight
- Injuring the toenail
- Having unusually curved toenails

If surgery is required, it is called a Wedge Resection. The operation takes off the edge of the nail and its nail bed. The toe nail is then narrow.

Length of surgery

Your child will be away from you for 45 to 60 minutes.

Post operatively

Some children may be upset on return from theatre. This can be normal after an anaesthetic and they should settle after a short time. The nurse will monitor your child closely post operatively. The nurse will take their pulse rate, check breathing and make sure your child is comfortable.

Your child will have a dressing covering their toe.

Antibiotics may be prescribed for you to take home.

Your child will need to stay post operatively in the ward for at least two hours, sometimes longer depending on their recovery. They must be fully awake and eating and drinking before going home.

Pain management

The type of pain relief needed after the operation depends on how big the surgery was. Your child will be given pain relief during their surgery, so should be comfortable on return from theatre. Please speak to your nurse if you feel that your child is in pain. At home, you should give pain relief regularly for the first 2-3 days.

Eating and drinking

Your child can start drinking and eating something light as soon as they are fully awake in the ward or day surgery unit.

Some children may have nausea and vomiting after surgery. Please inform your nurse if your child feels sick or vomits.

There is no need for a special diet after this surgery, but it is recommended that your child avoids greasy or junk food for approximately 24 hours after surgery.

At home

Nausea and vomiting

After Day Surgery, do not be concerned if your child vomits once or twice after leaving hospital.

If they vomit or feel sick, stop giving food for about an hour, then try a light diet, as much as your child can manage without feeling sick.

However, if your child keeps vomiting, please seek medical attention by either calling your child's surgeon or your nearest emergency department.

Activity

Your child should reduce their activities during the next 24 hours and be under adult supervision to help them fully recover from the anaesthetic and surgery.

Please check when your child can return to school with the surgical team.

Wound care

It is important to **elevate** the foot as much as possible on the day of surgery, for example, in the car on the way home and when at home. This is to prevent bleeding around the toenail.

It is best also to not wear closed in shoes in the first week; sandals or slippers are best.

There are few ways your wound may be managed after surgery:

- Dressings at home by a home nurse
- Or, leave dressing on, and review back in clinic by the surgeon
- Or, review by your GP

Nursing staff will let you know which plan has been asked for by your surgeon.

The dressing must stay dry and intact. Please seek medical attention if the dressings become wet or if the entire dressing comes off.

Look at the wounds for general signs of infection. These include heat to the site, pus/ooze, foul smell, swelling, redness, fever or pain. If signs of infection are noticed, seek medical attention.

Bleeding

If bleeding occurs sit your child down and elevate their leg on a chair or pillow. Apply pressure with a towel or gauze. Seek medical advice if bleeding doesn't stop.

Reduce your child's activities over the next 24 hours to prevent bleeding.

Bathing

Your child can bath/shower as long as the foot is covered with a sealed plastic bag to prevent water from getting onto the wound. An ordinary garbage bag with sticky tape around the top to seal it is easiest to use.

Follow up

A follow up appointment can either be arranged to return to the FMC outpatient department, or with your GP.

If appointment is at FMC, this will either be given to you upon discharge or posted to you in the mail.

If you have any concerns after your child's discharge please telephone your private consultant, local GP or FMC on (08) 8204 5511 and ask to speak to your surgical team.

In an emergency call an ambulance or take your child to the nearest doctor or hospital.

Adapted from

Ingrown Toenail Repair, Women's and Children's Hospital: Adelaide

For more information

Flinders Women and Children
Flinders Medical Centre
Bedford Park SA 5042
Telephone: 08 8204 5511



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