

NAIL SURGERY

Nail surgery is a procedure carried out to remove part or all of a nail. Problem nails that we commonly treat are, infected ingrowing toenails and curved or distorted/thick nails that are causing pain. Phenol is used to stop regrowth of the nail.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF HAVING NAIL SURGERY?

Permanent removal of part or all of the nail often cures the problem, although there is a small risk of re-growth. This procedure is known as 'Phenol Matrixectomy' and has a success rate of 95% or higher, in preventing re-growth of the nail.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN I HAVE NAIL SURGERY?

- You will be awake during the procedure
- A local anaesthetic is injected in the toe to stop you feeling pain. A tourniquet is then put onto the toe to reduce bleeding
- The piece of nail causing the problem is then removed, and phenol applied to stop the nail from growing back
- The tourniquet is taken off and a dressing is put on to cover the toe. If you have sickle cell anaemia, use of tourniquet is not recommended - please discuss with your podiatrist
- You will be given advice about how to look after your toe and a follow-up appointment, will be booked before you leave

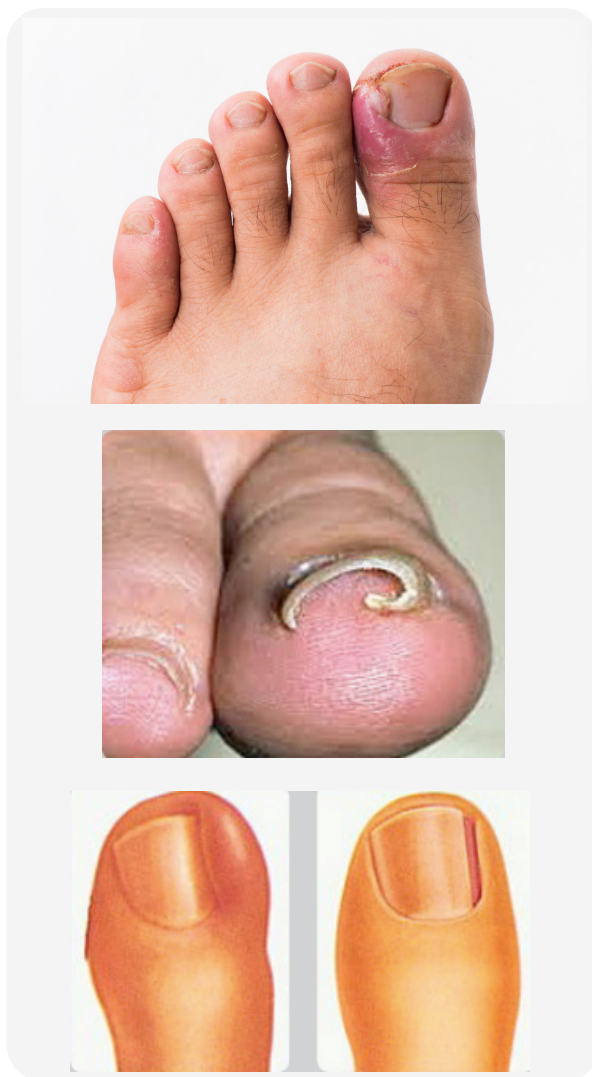
WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN I HAVE NAIL SURGERY?

Once the toe has been anaesthetised (numbed), you will be able to move the toe but will not feel any pain. There is some discomfort when Injecting the anaesthetic but this only lasts a couple of minutes. The local anaesthetic usually wears off in 2-4 hours.

WHAT WILL MY TOE LOOK LIKE AFTERWARDS?

Below is a photo of an ingrown toenail and an example of a before and after picture for an infected ingrowing toenail.

The result of your procedure will depend on your particular toenail problem and the exact procedure.



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WILL NAIL SURGERY AFFECT MY DAILY ACTIVITIES?

- If you have an active job, you may need to take a few days off work to rest the toe(s)
- We recommend that you wear open toe shoes until the first redressing appointment. Please be aware that these may not comply with work Health & Safety requirements
- We recommend that school children do not go back to school until after the first appointment where the toe is dressed (two days)
- Surgery can be arranged to avoid clashes with other commitments for example, exams, holidays

ALTERNATIVE TREATMENTS

- In rare circumstances, if a local anaesthetic cannot be used, a referral can be written for the procedure to be carried out under a general anaesthetic
- Careful nail cutting. We can give you nail care advice to help you maintain your nails
- Avoid tight footwear

PLEASE NOTE:

If you have a fear of needles, please advise your Podiatrist. It may be a good idea to contact your Doctor for a sedative prior to your appointment.

If you are late for your appointment, there will be insufficient time to carry out the assessment, consent and treatment, and so the appointment will have to be rebooked.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF NOT HAVING THE PROCEDURE

- If the nail is causing bacterial infection, then the infection is likely to reoccur even with repeated courses of antibiotics
- If the nail is causing discomfort, this may continue

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS/RISKS?

In rare cases, the following may occur:

- Infection of the wound
- Bruising from the injection or tourniquet
- Allergic reaction to the local anaesthetic
- Pain
- Periostitis - infection/inflammation of the lining of the toe bone
- Re-growth of the nail which may have to be removed if it is causing discomfort
- Persistent wound drainage
- Persistent numbness
- Long healing time of between 6-12 weeks
- Cosmetic changes - when healed, usually normal skin will cover the removed nail
- If the nail does re-grow, it may grow back deformed, even though the pain may have gone

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