

Your Guide to Foot Surgery

Pre-Operative Preparation & Post-Operative Care

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1. Introduction

This guide has been created to help you prepare for your upcoming foot surgery and to understand the recovery process. Please read this booklet carefully and bring it with you on the day of your surgery.

2. Understanding Your Surgery

Your foot surgery may involve procedures such as:

- Bunion correction (Hallux Valgus)
- Hammer toe correction
- Achilles tendon repair
- Ankle fusion or reconstruction
- Plantar fasciitis release
- Fracture fixation

Your surgeon will explain the exact procedure and expected outcomes specific to your case.

3. Pre-Operative Preparation

- **Medical Clearance:** You may need blood tests, ECG, or review by your GP or physician.
- **Medications:** Inform your surgeon of all medications. Blood thinners may need to be stopped.
- **Fasting:** Do not eat or drink for 6 hours before your surgery unless instructed otherwise.
- **Smoking & Alcohol:** Avoid smoking and alcohol for at least one week before surgery.
- **Footwear:** Bring supportive footwear or post-op shoe for your other foot.
- **Transport:** Arrange for someone to take you home after surgery.

4. Hospital Stay

Depending on the procedure, your stay may be **day surgery** or an **overnight admission**. You'll receive:

- Antibiotics to reduce infection risk
- Anaesthesia (local, regional, or general)
- Post-operative instructions before discharge

5. Post-Operative Care

- **Elevation:** Elevate your leg above heart level for the first 48–72 hours to reduce swelling.
- **Rest:** Minimise walking. Use crutches, walker, or a knee scooter if advised.
- **Bandages/Splint:** Keep the dressing dry and intact. Do not remove unless instructed.
- **Follow Instructions:** Adhere to activity restrictions and medication advice.

6. Pain Management

- Pain is expected but manageable.
 - Use prescribed medications regularly for the first 48–72 hours.
 - Apply ice packs (over the dressing) for 20 minutes every 2–3 hours.
 - Do not take anti-inflammatory medications unless approved, as they can impair healing in some surgeries.
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7. Wound Care

- **Keep Dry:** Do not wet the wound until your surgeon gives clearance (typically 14 days).
 - **Dressing Changes:** Only change dressings if instructed.
 - **Signs of Infection:** Redness, warmth, pus, or increasing pain—contact your surgeon immediately.
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8. Mobilisation & Physiotherapy

- **Non-weight bearing or partial weight bearing:** Your surgeon will instruct you regarding how much weight you can put on the operated foot.
 - **Physiotherapy:** May be required depending on the surgery. A referral will be arranged if needed.
 - **Return to Work/Sports:** Varies from 2 weeks (minor procedures) to 3–6 months (complex reconstructions).
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9. When to Seek Help

Contact your surgeon or go to the Emergency Department if you experience:

- Fever $>38^{\circ}\text{C}$
 - Increasing pain not controlled by medication
 - Bleeding or foul-smelling wound discharge
 - Calf pain or swelling (possible clot)
 - Numbness or blue toes
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10. Follow-Up Schedule

- **Initial Post-Op Visit:** 2-3 weeks for wound check and suture removal (if needed)
 - **Subsequent Visits:** At 6-8 weeks, 3 months, and as advised for X-rays or assessment
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11. Contact Information

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