

Ingrown Toenail Surgery

What to Expect & How to Take Care of your Toe(s) After Surgery

To have at home prior to surgery:

- Bottle of plain or extra strength tylenol/acetaminophen
- Bottle of advil/ibuprofen
- Tub or bathtub to soak foot in warm water
- Dressing supplies:
 - 2x2 gauze
 - 3 rolls of roll gauze
 - Plastic medical tape
 - Polysporin ointment

To Bring with to the surgery:

- Open toed-slip on sandals
- Your list of medications and/or pill bottles
- Someone to drive you home

If you're concerned about the needles, we suggest applying EMLA cream (local anesthetic cream) prior to surgery:

- We recommend that you check with your local pharmacy to see if they can supply it
- If not, Aikenheads in Renfrew has the tubes
- Cost is approximately \$10-20

Application of EMLA cream:

- Apply it 30-60 minutes prior to coming to the hospital in the locations seen in the picture below and down on to the underside of the big toe. Here's a YouTube link to show how to apply it if you'd like more information:
<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=ocITkpMaCyU>
- Cover the cream in cling wrap/plastic wrap
- Wear open toed sandals to the procedure
- If you're having both toes operated on, apply cream to the base of both big toes (see picture on following page).



AFTER CARE:

On the Way Home:

- Sit in the back seat of the car and keep your foot/feet elevated

At Home for the 1st 24 Hours:

- Keep your foot/feet elevated – this helps to reduce any bleeding
- For pain take:
 - Ibuprofen – take 400mg every 6 hours while awake x maximum 5 days
 - Tylenol – take 650mg every 6 hours while awake

24 hours After Surgery – The First Soak

- Soak your toe in warm water for 10 minutes
- Remove the big gauze dressing while your toe is in the water – it can take 20-30 minutes or more to remove the first dressing due to some tenderness. The water will help it stick less.
- Your toe may bleed a lot when you remove the dressing – this is **NORMAL** with the first few soaks and this is why you remove the dressing when the toe is in the water
- **After the dressing is off, continue to soak your toe (s) for an additional 15-20 minutes**

After soaking for the first week

- Dry our foot/feet, apply some polysporin to the toe(s), and put 2 square pieces of gauze (2x2) on your toe(s)
- Secure the gauze snugly by wrapping the roll gauze around the toe 2-3 times

- Use tape to hold the roll gauze in place

Your toe(s) must be soaked 3 times each day for 15-20 minutes EACH TIME until your toe is healed (4-6 weeks).

If you do not soak your toe(s) 3 times each day for 15-20 minutes each time, it will not heal properly (will take longer to heal and look very messy).

After 1 week:

- Stop bandaging the toe(s), continue with the soaks as above
- Leave your toe open to the air as much as possible

Additional FAQs

- **Can I put cream or ointment on my toe?**
 - It's not usually necessary to put any cream or ointment on your toe other than polysporin for the first week unless the surgeon instructs you otherwise. If your toe(s) continues to bleed after your soak, you can put a blob of Polysporin on the wound(s) before bandaging.
- **My toe looks a bit red and infected. Is this normal?**
 - Yes, this is part of the normal healing process, antibiotics are not generally necessary. If the toe is getting more sore or the redness is spreading up your toe or on to your foot, call the surgeon.
- **When should I contact the doctor who did my surgery if I'm concerned about infection or go into the Emergency Room?**
 - You should contact the doctor if the redness worsens or goes beyond the area around your surgery (i.e. if the redness goes beyond the toe, onto the foot) or if your pain worsens
 - If you're having fevers or feel unwell
- **Can I play sports after my surgery?**
 - No sports, jogging, etc., until your toe is completely healed (4-6 weeks)
- **Can I shower after the procedure?**
 - Yes, you can shower after the procedure. Have a shower with the bandages on, then do a 15 minute soak right after

Follow-up:

For follow-up, you will see either a surgeon in approximately 4-6 weeks after the surgery to ensure the toe(s) are healing up well. You should receive a call from our office to make that appointment.

Please call earlier or head to the RVH ED if you are having problems earlier or don't hear from our office about a follow-up appointment.

Office phone #: 613-432-7201 (work daytime hours)