

Metatarsal Fracture Fixation

INTRODUCTION

The metatarsals are the long bones that connect your midfoot to your toes. Fractures of these bones sometimes need to be fixed with surgery to correct displacement and ensure healing in the correct position.

THE SURGERY

Metatarsal fracture surgery involves a number of steps:

- General anaesthetic and IV antibiotics
- Tourniquet around the thigh
- Incision/s over the fracture/s
- Reduction of the fractures and insertion of bone graft if required
- Internal fixation with plates, screws and/or wires
- Check X-rays
- Closure of incision/s with sutures
- Local anaesthetic block
- Surgical camboot (VACOcast)

GUIDELINES FOR POST-OP RECOVERY

HOSPITAL ADMISSION

- Most patients go home on the day of surgery

FIRST 2 WEEKS

- Elevate foot and rest
- Strictly **NON-WEIGHTBEARING** in surgical boot
- Mobilise with knee scooter/crutches/frame
- Boot and dressings to stay dry and intact
- Strong painkillers as required
- Aspirin 100mg and Vitamin C 1g per day
- Wiggle toes to encourage circulation

2 WEEK POST-OP APPOINTMENT

- Review by nurse & removal of dressings and sutures

WEEKS 3-6

- **PARTIAL OR FULL WEIGHTBEARING** in boot
- Surgical boot on at ALL times, including in bed and showers, except for physio/exercises
- Elevate foot when not walking
- Continue Aspirin & Vitamin C
- Daily scar massage from 3 weeks post-op
- Physiotherapy review (arrange first appointment for 2-5 days after the 2-week post-op check)
- **PHYSIOTHERAPY:**
 - Commence active and passive range of movement exercises - ankle and toe flexion/extension
 - **NO** rotational movements or stress to midfoot
 - General upper body, core, hip and knee strength & conditioning

6 WEEK POST-OP APPOINTMENT

- X-ray and review by Dr Zilko

FROM 6 WEEKS

- **PHYSIOTHERAPY:**
 - Commence **FULL** weightbearing and transition out of boot into normal supportive shoes
 - Continue ROM
 - Gait re-training
 - Ankle stability and proprioception exercises
 - Stationary bicycle/elliptical trainer

3 MONTH POST-OP APPOINTMENT

- X-ray and review by Dr Zilko

FROM 3 MONTHS

- Return to normal activities if fracture healed
- **PHYSIOTHERAPY:**
 - Straight-line jogging from 3 months and progress
 - Work-specific or sport-specific training

Full recovery is usually 3-6 months.

Every patient's recovery is individual and depends on the severity of the injury and complexity of the surgery.