

Excision of Soft Tissue Lesion

INTRODUCTION

Abnormal soft tissue lesions in the foot and ankle can cause pain, irritation, impingement on nerves and difficulty with shoe wear. Lumps and bumps are most commonly benign ganglions arising from a joint or tendon sheath, but can be a variety of other pathologies. Pre-operative MRI scan is usually necessary to identify the source of the lesion and confirm the diagnosis. They often need to be surgically excised.

THE SURGERY

Excision of a soft tissue lesion involves a number of steps:

- General anaesthetic and IV antibiotics
- Tourniquet around the thigh
- Incision over the affected area
- Careful dissection of the lesion, with identification and protection of surrounding structures (eg nerves, tendons, blood vessels etc)
- Removal of the lesion and sending of tissue for pathology review
- Irrigation of wound and closure with sutures
- Local anaesthetic block
- Surgical shoe or camboot (depending on location and extent of lesion)

GUIDELINES FOR POST-OP RECOVERY

HOSPITAL ADMISSION

- Most patients go home on the day of surgery

FIRST 2 WEEKS

- Elevate foot and rest
- Full weightbearing as tolerated in the surgical shoe or boot (unless told otherwise by Dr Zilko)
- Crutches for balance and support if required
- Dressings to stay dry and intact
- Strong painkillers as required

2 WEEK POST-OP APPOINTMENT

- Review by Dr Zilko and nurse for removal of dressings and sutures
- Follow-up of pathology results

AFTER POST-OP APPOINTMENT

- Transition to normal supportive shoes
- Daily scar massage from 3 weeks
- Return to most activities from 6 weeks
- Full recovery is usually within 3 months

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