

Hallux Valgus (Bunion) Correction

INTRODUCTION

A bunion (or hallux valgus) refers to an increase in the angulation of the big toe joint (1st metatarsophalangeal joint). The cause of bunions is not fully understood, but there are a number of risk factors including family history, being female and certain types of shoes. Surgery is an effective way to relieve the pain caused by bunions in the majority of cases.

THE SURGERY

Bunion correction surgery involves a number of steps:

- General anaesthetic and IV antibiotics
- Tourniquet around the thigh
- Incision/s along the inside of the big toe
- Release of the tight lateral structures
- Re-alignment of the 1st metatarsal bone (Sarf or Chevron osteotomy), fixed with 2 screws
- Re-alignment of the 1st proximal phalanx bone (Akin osteotomy), fixed with a screw or staple
- Check x-ray and closure of incision with sutures
- Local anaesthetic block, dressings & surgical shoe

GUIDELINES FOR POST-OP RECOVERY

HOSPITAL ADMISSION

- Most patients go home on the day of surgery

FIRST 2 WEEKS

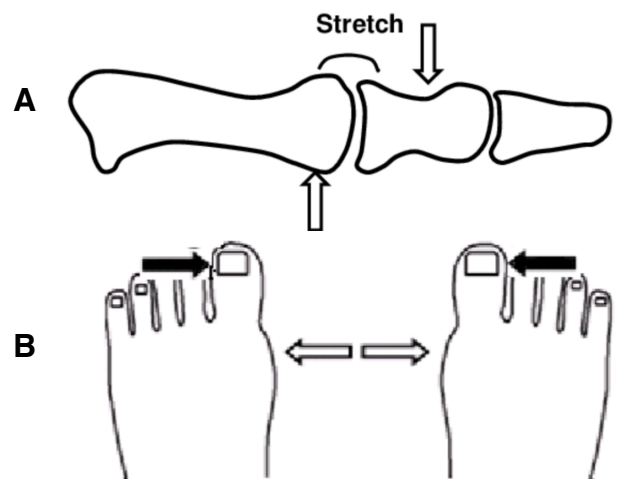
- Elevate foot and rest
- Full weightbearing as tolerated in surgical shoe (put weight through heel, not through toes)
- Surgical shoe on at all times (including bed & shower)
- Crutches for balance if required
- Dressings to stay dry and intact
- Strong painkillers as required
- Antibiotics if prescribed

2 WEEK POST-OP APPOINTMENT

- Review by nurse & removal of dressings and sutures
- Fitting of Bunion Sleeve splint

WEEKS 3-6

- Full weightbearing as tolerated in surgical shoe
- Surgical shoe on for any weightbearing
- Can sleep out of shoe at night
- Bunion Sleeve on during day, off at night
- Elevate foot when not walking
- Daily scar massage from 3 weeks post-op
- *Exercise 1:* Using both your hands put some pressure where the arrows indicate. It is easiest to do this with your foot crossed over the other knee. Each exercise: Push & hold for 10 seconds. Do sets of 10, 2 x per day



- *Exercise 2:* Scrunch toes on an "imaginary" towel & hold for 10 seconds. Do a set of 10, 2 x per day
- Podiatry review (arrange first appointment for 2-5 days after the 2-week post-op check)
- **PODIATRY: Foot & Ankle Rehabilitation Centre**
 - Paraffin therapy, joint mobilisation, cold laser, soft tissue manipulation and nerve desensitisation

6 WEEK POST-OP APPOINTMENT

- X-ray and review by Dr Zilko

FROM 6 WEEKS

- Transition to normal stiff-soled supportive shoes
- Avoid barefoot walking and impact exercises until 10-12 weeks post-op

3 MONTH POST-OP APPOINTMENT

- X-ray and review by Dr Zilko

Full recovery 3-6 months, can take up to 12 months.
Every patient's recovery is individual and depends on the severity of the disease and complexity of the surgery.