

HALLUX RIGIDUS/BUNION – FUSION

Information: Hallux rigidus is arthritis of the big toe joint and can be treated without surgery. A bunion is a deformity of the big toe. Some patients with arthritis or severe bunions are treated with a fusion of their big toe. A fusion is where I remove the joint(s) and connect bones together. Patients may have other deformities and/or painful conditions that may be fixed at the same time, eg, hammertoes, bunions, metatarsalgia (foot pain/overload), crossover toes, etc. Often, I will make a small incision on the side of your heel to remove bone graft from your heel bone to help the process fuse faster. Risks of surgery include, but are not limited to: infection, wound healing issues, scar, swelling, stiffness, pain, numbness, injury to vessels, bone healing problems, hardware problems/need for hardware removal, recurrence, other deformity, need for future surgery, perhaps a condition you may feel is worse or not much better from your preoperative status. If you need an excuse for work, please let us know before surgery. Most patients can drive in their postoperative shoe around 2-4 wks and depending on your job, most can return to work in 1-4wks in their short walker boot.

On the day of surgery: You and your anesthesiologist will determine what is best for your surgery. Often, a block is provided by the anesthesiologist. This will decrease the amount of pain after surgery. The risks of anesthesia/block will be discussed with the anesthesiologist. You will be brought to the operating room and your leg will be cleaned for surgery. Drapes will then be placed over your leg and your entire body to keep our field clean. You will be given antibiotics before/during surgery. I will perform your surgery (perform an incision, perform the surgery as above and as we discussed in the clinic, fuse the big toe, add hardware, close the tissue/skin, and then place a special dressing on your foot. After surgery, I will discuss the surgery with your guest that day.

After Surgery: You will be taken to the recovery room and sent home when the nurses and anesthesiologist think you are suitable for discharge. You will be placed into a post-op shoe. You are not allowed to walk on the operative leg. You will be sent home on pain medicine with the hope that you can discontinue it as quick as possible. You can use crutches, knee walker, walker, wheelchair.

Postoperative Course:

2 weeks – My team or myself will see you for a dressing and suture removal, x-rays, and heel weight bearing in the short boot for another 2wks.

4 weeks – You can weight bear as tolerated in the boot

8 weeks – I will see you for repeat x-rays and you will begin transitioning over the next few weeks to a shoe

10-16 weeks – You will begin to feel that this is “behind you” and although you are not fully normal/ healed, you should be doing quite well. Swelling is the last issue to resolve and can be 6-12 months for any foot surgery. Your big toe will not bend, and this is normal. I’m happy to see you at any time during the scheduled visits or unscheduled visits if you have questions/concerns. *Thank you and I will take excellent care of you!*

Disclaimer: These are general statements and may not apply specifically to your care. I may modify as needed for your individual care.