

In-growing toenail surgery

This leaflet aims to answer some of the questions that you/ your child may have about their operation. You will also have an opportunity to discuss any further concerns with us, on admission.

A general anaesthetic requires your child to be starved beforehand.

Morning admission:

Last food: 2.30am

Breastfeed: 4.30am

Water or weak squash until 7.30am

Afternoon admission:

Last food: 7.30am

Breastfeed: 9.30am

Water or weak squash until 12.30pm

Please be aware that milk and chewing gum is considered food.

If you do not follow these instructions your child's procedure may be delayed or even cancelled.

About the nail surgery

This operation is performed under a general anaesthetic (your child is asleep). The procedure involves the removal of either the whole nail and nail bed or the edges of the affected nail and the adjacent parts of the nail bed. While your child is asleep, an injection of painkiller will be injected into the toe area. This will provide pain relief once they are awake after surgery.

Is there an alternative to surgery?

Your GP or podiatrist/chiropractor will have probably explored alternative treatments for your child's in-growing toenail(s), such as careful maintenance of the feet and/or antibiotic treatment. Surgery is the usual treatment for persistent in-growing toenails.

What are the risks of the procedure?

The risks of this kind of surgery, such as bleeding or infection are small. Most are treatable and therefore there is a very low chance of a lasting problem as a result.

Every anaesthetic carries a risk, but this is small. The anaesthetic will be given by an anaesthetist (a specially trained doctor). After having an anaesthetic some children may feel sick or vomit. They may have a headache, sore throat, feel dizzy or be upset. These side effects are usually not severe and are short-lived.

What shall I bring to hospital?

Some children find it reassuring to bring a familiar toy from home. A play specialist may be involved in your child's care, and they will be able to provide a range of suitable toys and activities. A gown will be provided to wear to theatre. However, children may want to bring their own nightwear, slippers and dressing gown to change into afterwards.

What happens on admission?

The surgeon will explain the procedure to you on the ward, and can discuss any worries that you may have. An anaesthetist will also visit you to explain the anaesthetic. **If your child has any medical problems, e.g. allergies, please tell the surgeon and anaesthetist about these.** Your child may also have 'magic cream' (local anaesthetic) applied to the back of their hands so that the anaesthetic injection will be less painful. One parent/carer will be able to accompany your child to the anaesthetic room and stay with them until they are asleep.

What happens after the operation?

After your child has had their operation they will be taken into the recovery room to wake up. Once they are sufficiently recovered, you may be able to accompany the nurse to collect them and bring them back to the ward. Children are given pain relief during their operation. If necessary, further pain relief will be given on the ward. It is possible that your child may vomit following surgery – medicine can be given to relieve this if the vomiting persists.

If there is evidence of an infection before the operation, a course of antibiotics will be given to take home with you.

When can we go home?

When your child is suitably recovered they will be discharged home, later the same day.

Advice after operation

- There will be a firm pressure bandage around the toe - this should be left undisturbed, as instructed by the surgeon. During this time it is advised that your child should stay off school for a few days, and keep the foot and leg elevated.
- When walking, your child should not place too much pressure on the affected toe. To avoid doing this your child can take the weight on the heel of their foot.
- When sitting down your child should elevate their foot.
- Your child may experience some pain or discomfort. You may give Paracetamol (Calpol), following the dosage on the bottle.
- Before going home you may be given appropriate footwear for your child to wear.
- On discharge from the ward will give you a follow up appointment for a dressing review in 7 – 10 days.

Contacting us

Pre-clerking nurse: 0118 322 7518

Kempton Day Bed Unit: 0118 322 7512 / 8754 (Mon-Fri 7am-7pm)

Lion/Dolphin Wards: 0118 322 7519 / 8075 (outside of these hours)

Angie Lee, Nurse Consultant 0118 322 8747

Nina Doherty, Clinical Nurse Specialist 0118 322 8746 or bleep 232

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

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Next review due: November 2024