

Surgery for Morton's neuroma

What is Morton's neuroma?

Morton's neuroma is a condition that affects one of the nerves that run between the metatarsal bones in the foot. The exact cause is not certain. Symptoms include pain, burning, numbness and tingling between two of the toes of the foot.

Why do I need this?

This operation is carried out to relieve the pain caused by the condition. Surgery is usually recommended when more conservative treatments such as wearing an orthotic insoles, exercises and injections don't work.

How is it done?

You will be asked to wash your feet thoroughly on the day of operation and keep them clean, as this will reduce the rate of infection.

Surgery normally involves a small incision (cut) being made on the top of the foot between the affected toes. The surgeon will then divide the ligament between the 2 adjacent metatarsals to expose and cut out the affected nerve. The tissue removed is sent off to the laboratory for analysis. The wound is closed with dissolvable stitches.

The operation takes about 30 minutes and is done under either a general anaesthetic (you are asleep) or a local anaesthetic (you are awake but your foot is numbed and you may be drowsy if you are also given sedation). This is generally done as a day case procedure.

After the operation

You will have mild to moderate pain to the scale of 5/10 and will need some painkillers for the first few days. You need to keep the foot elevated for the first few days until the swelling settles.

You will have a bulky dressing, which will be changed to a lighter dressing at the first follow up appointment.

You will be walking on the heel for the first 2 weeks and progress to normal walking as pain allows.

You will then be followed up in clinic in 10 to 14 days to check the wound and again at 6 weeks to assess the healing.

You may need 2 weeks of time off work depending on the nature of your job.

You won't be able to drive until you can do an emergency stop without any pain in the foot.

What risks are there involved in the procedure?

- Infection
- Nerve damage – causing numbness and painful scar
- Deep vein thrombosis (DVT) and pulmonary embolism (PE) – blood clots in the vein or lungs – very rare
- Transfer metatarsalgia – pain under the other toes.
- Numbness. If the nerve is resected (cut out), there will be some permanent numbness of the skin between the affected toes.

If there is anything you do not understand or if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to discuss them with your doctor or nurse.

Where to get further information

For more information about the Trust visit our website www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Useful numbers and contacts

Adult Day Surgery Unit:	0118 322 7622
Redlands Ward:	0118 322 7484 / 7485
Pre-operative Assessment:	0118 322 6546

Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust
London Road
Reading RG1 5AN
0118 322 5111 (switchboard)

This document can be made available in other languages and formats upon request.

Mr C Arvind, Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon, March 2016

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