

HALLUX METATARSOPHALANGEAL JOINT ARTHRODESIS

Postoperative Recovery Protocol

Type of Procedure: Outpatient
Length of Procedure: 1 hour
Anesthesia: Local with sedation (twilight) and nerve block

Fusion of the hallux MP joint. What is it?

This operation is designed to glue (fuse) the big toe joint together. It is also called an arthrodesis of the big toe or metatarsophalangeal joint. This is a very commonly performed operation for arthritis and deformity of the big toe joint.

Once fused, the big toe does not move except at the end joint

The toe is positioned according to the need to roll off the big toe, exercise or the desire to different types including high heel shoes

Once fusion is successful, you will be able to wear most shoes, including a high heel if desired of about one and a half inches.

There are no limits to exercise activities after the fusion, including all sports and running.

Recovery: General factors

You are able to walk on the outside of the foot the day after surgery

You must wear your surgical shoe at all times until the joint is fused

You may not walk on the bare foot at all, even in the house without this shoe

You may drive as soon as comfortable, usually at 4 days if the left foot and 7 days if the right foot.

The surgical shoe is worn for 6-8 weeks

Limited exercise that does not involve any bending of the big toe joint is allowed at about four weeks after surgery

Specific Post-Operative Course:

Day 1

1. Foot wrapped in bulky bandage and surgical shoe
2. Ice, elevate, take pain medication
3. Expect numbness in foot 12-24 hours
4. Blood drainage through bandage is expected
5. Do not change bandage for two to three days.
6. Do not remove surgical shoe – even at night

Day 3



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1. Start walking on the heel and outside of foot in surgical shoe only.
2. Do not remove surgical shoe – even at night
3. Ice, elevate as much as possible
4. Remove dressings, can clean wound with antibiotic ointment as instructed.

Day 7

1. Continue walking in surgical shoe
2. There are two types of surgical shoes you will be given, one with a built-in heel which you will use for all walking, and the other is a hard shoe for use when you are driving only
3. May drive with caution in surgical shoe (if left foot, may be able to drive sooner)
4. Do not change dressing unless instructed

2 weeks

1. Shower when incision dry
2. Post-operative shoe at all times.

6 weeks

1. Remove surgical shoe- if the Xray looks ok and the bone is knotting together.
2. Do not roll off on the big toe for one more month.
3. A stiff soled shoe is important for one to two months
4. A regular shoe may then be worn as comfortable
5. No high heel is worn for two more months

