

# PREPARATION FOR FOOT SURGERY

**Alex Wee FRCS (Orth)**  
**Consultant Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgeon**  
**Frimley Park Hospital**

Foot surgery is rarely life threatening, but if complications arise they can cause great distress. The risk of complications can be reduced in a variety of ways. We would like to work with you to ensure that everything possible is done to maximise your chances of a smooth recovery. It is not possible to avoid all problems but the risks can be minimised.

The team looking after you are trained and experienced in the management of patients with foot problems.

## **General**

Before you come into hospital it is important that you maintain both your health and foot in the best possible condition for surgery.

In most cases, patients will be seen by the consultant or a member of the consultant's team in clinic. Once surgery has been decided upon, the surgical treatment plan, risks of surgery and postoperative rehabilitation process will be discussed in detail with them. Following that consultation, some patients may be seen several weeks before the expected date of surgery in the pre-admission clinic for an assessment of their general health, to ensure that all is well to proceed with the operation. If you have any questions regarding your surgical treatment, you should have them clarified at this stage. Certain patients may not need to be seen in the pre-admission clinic.

If you have any concerns about your general health, please tell us about them. You should contact your General Practitioner if you are on any treatment for asthma, breathing disorders, heart disease, or blood pressure. Try to do this on one of your routine check-up dates if possible.

## **Smoking**

Any patient having a general anaesthetic should give up smoking before the anaesthetic.

The risk of complications following foot surgery is greatly increased by smoking. You run a high risk of post-operative complications such as wound breakdown, wound infection, thrombosis (blood clots) and failure of the bones to heal.

## **Chiropody/Podiatry**

If you are having chiropody or podiatry treatments regularly, inform your therapist that you will be having surgery. Try to arrange your last treatment about a week before surgery. Do not have your treatments after this time without asking your surgeon.

### **Athletes Foot**

If you have Athletes Foot you should try to get this cleared up by the time of your surgery. Use an antifungal ointment regularly, but do not let your feet get soggy from overuse. Treat your socks and shoes with antifungal powder to prevent re-infection. If you need help treating the infection ask your General Practitioner or Pharmacist.

### **Understanding your operation**

It is important that you understand what is going to happen to you, and what problems and complications may arise.

For certain operations we have explanatory information leaflets. Whether there is an information sheet or not for you, you should ensure that you understand what is happening before you sign your consent form. You should not proceed to surgery unless you are happy with this. The surgeon should clearly explain the procedure and what it involves to you during your clinic consultation. If you feel that you do not understand your operation, and the possible problems that can arise, tell your nurse or ask the surgeon prior to signing the consent form. Ideally you should have all your questions answered before your day of admission. Any final queries can be clarified when you see your surgeon during the preoperative ward round.