

Ankle and Hindfoot/Midfoot

The practicalities of Foot and Ankle surgery.

1. Cast/Back slab, Moonboot. At the end of the surgery your foot will be placed into one of these. The most common is a back slab which is a $\frac{3}{4}$ cast to allow for swelling.
2. Pain control: Local anaesthetic. For pain control, we will place some local anaesthetic into the area of surgery, or a nerve block. The nerve block can make the foot numb for up to 48 hrs. The local block wears off in 6-12 hours. Make sure you are taking pain medication prescribed BEFORE the block wears off.
3. Mobility: After most surgeries unless told, you will need to be NON-WEIGHT BEARING- (not putting weight on the foot/ankle) this means using crutches, a frame, or a KNEE SCOOTER for ambulation. If you anticipate difficulty, pre-surgery training with physiotherapy can be valuable.
4. ELEVATION: Swelling after Foot and Ankle surgery can be significant. Being upright/erect, can lead to excessive swelling. It's important to keep the foot elevated at the level of your heart (roughly) as much as possible for the first 10 days. That's 2 pillows. Don't let the foot hang dependent for longer than 20-30 minutes when moving around in this time.
5. Showering/Bathing. It's really important to keep the dressings and the cast dry until removed and instructed after your post-surgery visit and examination. Ways of doing this are to place a plastic bag over the foot/ankle and shower sitting down on a plastic stool/chair place in the shower. There are products one can buy to seal the limb for showering. 2.

Bath with one's foot hanging out of the bath- but still seal with a plastic bag and tape.

6. Other advice: Pain control-the first 48 hrs. are the worst, then it starts easing off. Wean yourself from the high schedule drugs if pain improving. Watch for constipation and take a laxative if vulnerable. Your foot/ankle will respond favorably to elevation with regards pain.
7. Post op visit.: This will usually be 9-12 days post-surgery. The practice will let you know a time - on a Wednesday afternoon- most likely. At this visit you will have the back slab splint/cast/boot removed and the incisions checked and re-dressed. Then depending on the surgery placed into a boot or a cast. You will be given further instructions at this time about post op care.
8. Driving. When you can get back to driving a car depends on the side of surgery (right or Left) and the surgery done its self: Generally if you have had surgery on the Right foot/ankle you cannot drive for 6-8 weeks. If on the L foot, Ankle you may be able to drive an AUTOMATIC car after 3 weeks, being careful getting in and out of the vehicle. At the post surgery visit you will get more accurate instructions.

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