



**Prof Graham McCollum Inc.**  
Orthopaedic surgeon  
MBChB (UCT), FCS Orth (SA), MMed (UCT)  
Practice no. 0983764

## **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.

Prof. Graham McCollum



DR GRAHAM MCCOLLUM  
FACF, FRCGS, FRCR, FRCR (S) 2015

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