

Forefoot surgery, toes, and soft tissue.

The practicalities of Foot and Ankle surgery.

1. **Post-surgical shoe.** At the end of the surgery your foot will be placed into a special shoe that allows you to walk on the heel/hindfoot so there is no pressure on the surgery site of the toes. If You've just had a soft tissue procedure done, there may be no need for a shoe- just a bulky dressing.
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 be able to weight bear on the heel of your foot with the post-surgical shoe. You may need crutches for assistance in walking, particularly if you had surgery on both feet at the same time.
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 important to keep the dressings and the bandages 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 placed in the shower. There are products one can buy to seal the limb for showering.

Or you can 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 shoe removed and all the dressing and have the incisions checked and re-dressed. Then, depending on the surgery, placed back into the special shoe if treated with one after the surgery. 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 itself: Generally if you have had surgery on the Right foot you cannot drive for 6 weeks. If on the Left foot you may be able to drive an AUTOMATIC car after the post surgery visit 9-12 days post operation, being careful getting in and out of the vehicle. At the post surgery visit you will get more accurate instructions.

Prof. Graham McCollum



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Graham McCollum". Below the signature, there is a small, faint printed text that is partially obscured and difficult to read, but includes "Graham McCollum" and "Orthopaedic Surgeon".

Dictated with Dragon™ software not checked.

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