

Preparing for your nail surgery

Information for patients who have already been assessed and booked for nail surgery.

What happens?

A local anaesthetic is injected to numb your toe. A tourniquet (a small rubber band) may be applied temporarily to reduce bleeding. Part or all of the affected nail will be removed. Phenol may be applied to prevent the treated nail from regrowing.

You may feel discomfort during the injection. Once the anaesthetic wears off, your toe may throb or ache. Follow the pain-relief advice given by your podiatrist; do not use aspirin as pain relief after surgery unless a clinician has specifically advised you to do so. Do not stop prescribed aspirin without medical advice.

Please contact us before your appointment if:

- Your toe becomes more red, swollen, painful or starts discharging. Please email a clear photograph to info@therichardscentre.co.uk with the subject line "Infected Toe Photo – [Patient's full name]". Your podiatrist will advise whether surgery can proceed or treatment is needed first. Please do not cancel without speaking to the Centre.
- You are pregnant, may be pregnant or are breastfeeding.
- You are waiting for another operation.
- You have a dental or other appointment involving local anaesthetic within 24 hours of your nail surgery.

On the day

- Eat normally before your appointment. Surgery may need to be rearranged if you have not eaten.
- Continue your usual prescribed medication unless your clinician has instructed otherwise; do not take additional medication without advice.
- Bring any emergency medication you use, such as a Ventolin inhaler for asthma or GTN spray for angina.
- Avoid alcohol and remove nail polish from the affected nail.
- Bring a loose slipper or open-toed sandal: your dressing will be bulky.
- Arrange your journey home. Do not drive until the effects of the local anaesthetic have worn off.
- If you are under 16, a responsible adult must accompany you.

Allow time for your appointment

The procedure itself is usually quite short, but we allow plenty of time for preparation, the local anaesthetic to take effect, your treatment and dressing afterwards.

Please allow **1 hour 15 minutes** if one side of the nail is being treated, or **1 hour 30 minutes** if both sides are being treated.

Plan for recovery

- Rest and stay off your feet as much as possible for the first 24 hours.
- Arrange light duties at work if needed, and avoid tight footwear or pressure on the toe.
- Healing varies with the procedure, your health and aftercare. It can take around 6–10 weeks; your podiatrist can give a more individual estimate.

After your surgery

You will receive separate aftercare instructions explaining dressings, healing and when to contact the Centre.

Your first postoperative appointment is arranged for the day after surgery, or as close as possible, to check and change the dressing. A second appointment is usually arranged at this first follow-up, according to your podiatrist's advice. Both follow-up appointments are included in the cost of surgery.