ROBERT DEKKER, M.D.
ORTHOPEDIC SURGEON
Ascension

Rochester (248) 650-2400
Shelby Township (586) 254-2777
River District (810) 329-1250

Post Surgery Instructions
Hallux Valgus (Bunion) Correction

General Treatment Facts

- The goal of this surgery is to reduce pain and improve the alignment and function of the great toe joint.
- During this procedure, the metatarsal (toe) bone is cut and shifted in order to straighten the toe. The big toe ligaments are loosened on one side and tightened on the other to straighten the toe.
- You will be able to walk on the heel and outside of the foot the day of surgery while wearing a special post-operative shoe.
- You will experience significant swelling in the foot after surgery. This can last up to 4 to 6 months. The more that you elevate the foot and limit your walking in the first 2 weeks, the better your pain and swelling will be.
- The post-operative shoe must be worn for 6-12 weeks, depending on your specific procedure.
- You will not be able to drive until 6 weeks if it is your right foot.

Post Surgery Course

Day 1

- The foot will be wrapped with lots of padding and placed in a postop shoe. You may be placed in a plaster splint instead.
- Please do not remove the dressing. If for any reason the dressing is too tight, loosen it and re-apply it to your comfort level.
- It is important to ice and elevate the foot, take pain medication, and rest as needed.
- You may weight bear only on the outside and heel of your foot unless otherwise told by Dr. Dekker.
- Do not get the toe or dressing wet.
- Move the ankle, knee, hip, and upper extremities.

Day 4

- Pain should be better after the 3rd day. If your pain worsens after day 3 or you have a fever and/or chills, please call the office.

2 weeks (approximately)

- First post-operative visit.
- Your dressing will be taken off and your sutures will be removed.
- Continue to walk on the heel and outside of the foot only in the postop shoe.
- Your activity level will be about 30% of your normal activity level.

3 weeks

- Gentle exercise on a stationary bike is permitted.
- Continue to wear the post-operative shoe and do not roll through the front of the foot.

6 weeks

- If cleared by Dr. Dekker, you may drive in a supportive tennis shoe.
- Avoid walking on uneven or rocky terrain.
- If you have pins in your toes, they are usually pulled at this visit. You can get the foot wet 2-3 days after your pins are pulled.
- You can exercise on a bike as long as it's on the arch of the foot.

8 weeks

- Wean out of the postoperative shoe and into a comfortable rigid sole sneaker.
- It is normal to still be experiencing foot swelling at and beyond this point. You may require a shoe that is one to two sizes larger than your normal size. Otherwise, you may need to loosen your shoelaces to accommodate the swelling.

12 weeks

- Ambulate as tolerated in a comfortable, supportive tennis shoe.
- Increase activity as tolerated.