



Post Surgery Instructions

Subtalar (Hind Foot) Joint Fusion

General Facts

- The goal of this surgery is to reduce pain, swelling, and dysfunction. This operation is designed to fuse the joints at the back of the foot and lock those affected bones together.
- Up and down movement (dorsiflexion and plantarflexion) will not be affected. However, side-to-side motion will be eliminated completely.
- Screws are inserted into the heel bone to hold the joint together while it heals. Once the bone heals, the screws are not necessary. However, unless they are bothersome, they can be left in without any problems.
- You will not be able to walk on the foot for the first 6 weeks and you will be in a plaster splint for the first 10-14 days. Afterwards, you will be placed in a boot but will still need to be non-weightbearing with the use of crutches, a Roll-A-Bout knee scooter, or wheelchair for at least 6 weeks.

Post Surgery Course

Day 1

- The foot will be wrapped in a plaster splint with lots of padding and a removable bandage. If for any reason your splint is uncomfortable or too tight, remove the ace wrap, loosen the padding, and re-apply to your comfort level.
- It is important to ice and elevate the foot, take pain medication, and rest as needed.
- Expect numbness in the foot for 4-12 hours and then anticipate the onset of pain.
- Do not get the splint wet.
- Do not bear any weight on the operated foot.

Day 4

- Pain should be better after the 3rd day. If your pain has worsened since day 3 or you have a fever and/or chills, please call the office.
- Wiggle toes and move foot around in splint as tolerated.

Day 14 (approximately)

- First post-operative visit in the office.
- Your splint will be taken off and your sutures will be removed.
- You will be placed in a boot with your foot in a neutral position to prevent a large range of motion. You do not need to sleep in the boot.
- If the incision is healing well, you may begin to get the foot wet in the shower 2-3 days after your post-operative visit.
- Continue to be non-weightbearing with the use of crutches, a Roll-A-Bout knee scooter, or wheelchair.

6 Weeks

- Progressively increase weightbearing in the boot. Add 20 lbs every other day as tolerated until you are full weight bearing.
- Wean off of the crutches or Roll-A-Bout knee scooter as tolerated.

12 Weeks

- Wean out of the boot into a stiff soled tennis shoe.
- Increase activity as tolerated.