



# NAIL SURGERY

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**PODIATRY**  
SERVICES SA

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## WHY NAIL SURGERY?

Surgical procedures are commonly performed by Podiatrists to treat recurrent nail problems such as ingrown nails. An ingrown nail is a nail that has pierced (or is pressing against) the adjacent skin of the toe causing pain and inflammation and sometimes infection.

Surgery may be required when an ingrown toenail repeatedly gets infected, is continually painful, the sufferer is unable to wear shoes or the condition inhibits work, sporting or other activities.



## WHAT DOES NAIL SURGERY INVOLVE?

- The procedure is performed under local anaesthetic via injection into the toe to numb the area.
- Once numb, a tight elastic ring called a tourniquet is applied to the toe to control bleeding and the area is prepped to minimise risk of infection.
- The portion of the nail to be removed is then gently lifted and resected without the toe being cut or stitched.
- One or both sides of the nail or the whole nail may be removed in this way.
- A chemical is then applied to the nail matrix to assist in preventing nail regrowth.
- Once the procedure is completed, the tourniquet is removed, and a sterile dressing is applied.
- Your toe will take between 4-12 weeks to heal.



## LOCAL ANAESTHETIC INFORMATION

Local anaesthetic is a drug that stops you from feeling pain. The local anaesthetic is delivered into the toe via generally two injections at the base of the toe. You will be awake and aware while the local anaesthetic is being delivered.

People recover more quickly following surgery under local anaesthesia and can go home almost immediately following the procedure. The local anaesthetic generally lasts for about two hours. You can continue to take any prescribed medications you normally take and are able to eat and drink as normal.

Nail surgery under local anaesthesia is very safe. Some infrequent complications include: bruising, pain or injury at the site of injections; mild allergic reaction-itching or rash.

Serious but rare complications such as anaphylactic reaction can occur and can lead to life threatening complications. It is therefore essential to supply your podiatrist with details of your full medical history or if you have reacted to anaesthetic in the past, to help determine your suitability for the procedure.



## WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL RISKS WITH NAIL SURGERY?

- Small (6%) risk of nail regrowth. The procedure can be repeated if necessary.
- Small risk of post-operative infection as a wound is being created. Your Podiatrist will explain the aftercare for your toe to help minimise this risk.
- Risk of allergic reaction to the local anaesthetic.
- As a chemical is used to prevent regrowth, there is a chance that this can cause a chemical burn. The Podiatrist will take every care to minimise this risk.
- Pain, swelling, bruising, and change in appearance may also occur following nail surgery.
- Conditions such as diabetes, impaired circulation, impaired immune system and if you smoke can delay healing and further increase the risk of infection.



Any questions? Please call on

**08 8297 4808**



## WHAT SHOULD I DO THE DAY OF THE PROCEDURE?

- Ensure that you have a supply of your usual pain-relieving medications, ie. Paracetamol, Panadeine. It is not recommended that you take anti-inflammatories (ie. nurofen, aspirin) as these increase bleeding.
- If under 16 years of age, you will need to be accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- Please wear or bring with you a pair of sandals or open toed shoes to accommodate the dressings to wear for your trip home.
- It is not recommended that you drive home following the procedure as your toe will be numb. Please arrange alternative transport for your journey home.



## COST OF NAIL SURGERY

- The cost of surgery may vary depending on the type of toenail procedure required and on how many toes performed.
- A surgery assessment with one of our podiatrists will be required prior to the actual procedure. At this visit the podiatrist will advise you of the type of toenail procedure and the costs associated.
- If you are wanting to claim the procedure on your health insurance you are welcome to request the item numbers and costs at the surgery assessment visit. Your health fund will be able to advise you of your out of pocket expense.

