

# Nail Surgery and Nail Surgery Options

An information guide



# **Nail Surgery and Nail Surgery Options**

## **What is nail surgery?**

Nail surgery is a minor operation to permanently remove all or part of the nail. This aims to help relieve pain and discomfort and to prevent a problem from reoccurring. It is carried out under local anaesthetic, similar to a dental procedure.

## **Why do you need nail surgery?**

Nail surgery may be necessary if you are suffering from an ingrowing or painful misshapen nail.

## **Are there any risks involved?**

As with all surgical procedures there are some risks involved. These are rare, but may include:

- Infection following the procedure.
- Re-growth of the removed nail.
- Distortion of the remaining nail.
- Allergic reaction (rare).

## **Preparing for your appointment**

On the day of your appointment:

- Please ensure that any nails that are having the minor surgical procedure are completely clear of any nail varnish or synthetic material, including acrylic, gel or shellac nails.
- Bring a loose slipper or open toe sandal.
- Bring any inhalers, sprays or medication that you may need with you.
- If you are under 16, a parent or guardian must attend with you.
- There is no need to fast before your appointment.
- Arrange for a car or taxi to take you home, as due to the local anaesthetic your insurance to drive will not be valid.
- Make sure you plan for a few hours of rest after the treatment.

## **What happens when you come for treatment?**

Please familiarise with the advice to prepare for your appointment. The treatment itself will take around an hour.

Local anaesthetic will be injected into either side of your toe. When the toe is completely numb, the required section of nail is removed.

A chemical called phenol is applied to the area where the nail grows from (matrix) to try to prevent the nail from growing back.

Finally, a dressing will be applied to your toe. You will then be provided with an aftercare sheet and a follow up appointment to have the dressing changed, usually three or four days later.

## **After your operation**

You will be able to walk but your toes will feel numb until the anaesthetic wears off, which normally takes two to three hours. You must not drive until the anaesthetic has completely worn off.

There is generally very little bleeding after the operation, but more may occur with more severe cases of in-growing toe nails. If this does occur, the podiatrist will use a dressing to prevent further bleeding.

The chemical used to prevent the nail growing back (phenol) is very strong. Every effort is made to ensure that this does not touch the surrounding skin during the operation, however sometimes it can do and may cause a painless burn. This may delay the healing process slightly.

Please note we cannot guarantee the cosmetic appearance of the surgery site once it has healed.

## **Aftercare**

A dressing appointment will be made for you three to four days after the procedure. You will be given further guidance on aftercare at this appointment.

## Frequently asked questions

### ***When can I go back to work or school?***

Most people are able to return to work or school the next day

### ***How long will my toe take to heal?***

Everybody heals differently but usually the process takes between four and twelve weeks

### ***How long do I need to keep dressings on my toe?***

It is important to keep dressing your toe until the area is completely healed

### ***How will I know if my toe is infected?***

After nail surgery, it is normal for your toe to ooze a yellowish fluid. However if your toe becomes red, swollen and painful, with an increase in the discharge it may be infected. If this happens it's important that you contact the Podiatry Department or your GP as you may require a course of antibiotics.

### ***When can I resume sport?***

Trauma can impede healing, so ideally you should not resume sport until your toe has completely healed.

If you have any concerns, please contact your clinic.

## **Nail surgery options**

### **Partial nail avulsion**

The side(s) of the nail is removed and the area where the nail grows from is destroyed with a chemical, leaving the nail slightly narrower than before. This is the most common way of dealing with the problem.

### **Total nail avulsion**

The whole of the nail is removed and the area where the nail grows from is destroyed with a chemical to prevent it from growing back. When the whole of the nail is removed it can be tender for some time as the wound is larger.

When a chemical is used to destroy the growth area, the nail is not expected to grow back. However, occasionally the chemical does not reach every part of it and regrowth can occur.

Both procedures can be performed without using the chemical, but this means that the nail will be allowed to grow back and the problem can return as it grows.

### **Referral to a Surgeon**

Some medical conditions may mean that we have to refer you to a surgeon in a hospital setting.

You have been referred for (*Please tick*):

Partial Nail Avulsion.....[ ]

Total Nail Avulsion .....[ ]

## **Contact us**

Podiatry Department ,  
6th Floor ,  
Integrated Care Centre ,  
New Radcliffe Street ,  
Oldham ,  
OL1 1NL ,  
Telephone: 0161 357 5113

**If English is not your first language and you need help, please contact the Interpretation and Translation Service**

Jeśli angielski nie jest twoim pierwszym językiem i potrzebujesz pomocy, skontaktuj się z działem tłumaczeń ustnych i pisemnych

اگر انگریزی آپ کی پہلی زبان نہیں ہے اور آپ کو مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو ، براہ کرم ترجمانی اور ترجمہ خدمت سے رابطہ کریں

Dacă engleza nu este prima ta limbă și ai nevoie de ajutor, te rugăm să contactezi Serviciul de interpretare și traducere

ইংরাজী যদি আপনার প্রথম ভাষা না হয় এবং আপনার সাহায্যের প্রয়োজন হয় তবে অনুগ্রহ করে দোভাষী এবং অনুবাদ পরিষেবাটিতে যোগাযোগ করুন

إذا لم تكن الإنجليزية هي لغتك الأولى وتحتاج إلى مساعدة ، فيرجى الاتصال بخدمة الترجمة الشفوية والتحريرية

☎ : 0161 627 8770

@ : interpretation@pat.nhs.uk

To improve our care environment for Patients, Visitors and Staff, **Northern Care Alliance NHS Group** is Smoke Free including buildings, grounds & car parks.

For advice on stopping smoking contact the Specialist Stop Smoking Service on 01706 517 522

**For general enquiries please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 0161 604 5897**

**For enquiries regarding clinic appointments, clinical care and treatment please contact 0161 624 0420 and the Switchboard Operator will put you through to the correct department / service**

The Northern Care Alliance NHS Group (NCA) is one of the largest NHS organisations in the country, employing 17,000 staff and providing a range of hospital and community healthcare services to around 1 million people across Salford, Oldham, Bury, Rochdale and surrounding areas. Our Care Organisations are responsible for providing our services, delivering safe, high quality and reliable care to the local communities they serve.

The NCA brings together Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust and the hospitals and community services of The Royal Oldham Hospital, Fairfield General Hospital in Bury, and Rochdale Infirmary (currently part of The Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust).



[www.facebook.com/NorthernCareAllianceNHSGroup](http://www.facebook.com/NorthernCareAllianceNHSGroup)



[www.linkedin.com/company/northern-care-alliance-nhs-group](http://www.linkedin.com/company/northern-care-alliance-nhs-group)



Northern Care Alliance NHS Group (NCA) @NCAlliance\_NHS

**Date of publication: October 2019**

**Date of review: October 2021**

**Date of next review: October 2023**

**Ref: PI(CC)238**

© The Northern Care Alliance NHS Group



[www.pat.nhs.uk](http://www.pat.nhs.uk)

[www.northerncarealliance.nhs.uk](http://www.northerncarealliance.nhs.uk)