

V13lite Toe and Forefoot Amputation

Expires end of December 2019

A more detailed version of this procedure specific information sheet is available. Please ask your health practitioner at Joondalup Health Campus for a copy.

Write questions or notes here:



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This document will give you information about a toe and forefoot amputation. If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

What is foot disease?

Foot disease is where the tissues (skin and muscles) of your foot are dying. This usually happens as a result of atherosclerosis, where abnormal fatty material coats the inside of an artery, causing it to narrow or 'harden' (see figure 1). The amount of blood flowing through the artery is reduced.

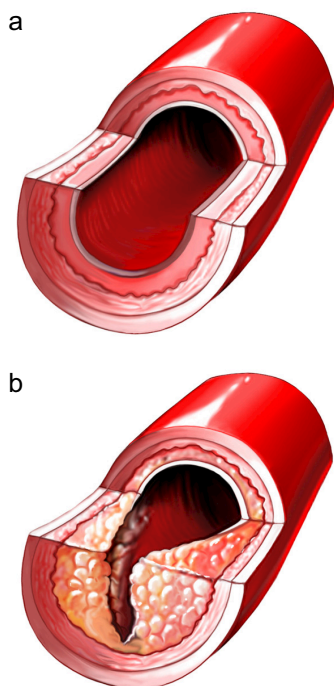


Figure 1

a A normal artery

b A narrowed artery

What are the benefits of surgery?

Surgery should relieve any pain, prevent the spread of infection, remove dead tissue, improve your mobility and can sometimes help you to return to normal activities.

Are there any alternatives to surgery?

The alternative is to take strong painkillers to treat any pain and to take antibiotics if you have an infection. However, leaving dead or infected tissue untreated can be dangerous as the infection can spread.

What does the operation involve?

Various anaesthetic techniques are possible.

The operation usually takes 15 minutes to an hour.

Your surgeon will remove any dead or infected tissue and will leave as much healthy tissue as possible.

Your surgeon may need to perform the amputation below your knee.

What complications can happen?

1 General complications

- Pain
- Bleeding
- Unsightly scarring
- Blood clots
- Difficulty passing urine

2 Specific complications

- Damage to small blood vessels
- Amputation failure
- Infection of the surgical site (wound)
- Phantom limb sensation
- Severe pain, stiffness and loss of use of your foot

How soon will I recover?

It is difficult to predict the length of recovery. You will usually stay on the ward for up to 10 days so your wound can be checked. You may be transferred to a rehabilitation ward to prepare for leaving hospital.

Regular exercise should help you to return to normal activities as soon as possible. Before you start exercising, ask the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

You can expect to make a good recovery with a better quality of life.

Summary

Foot disease is a common condition caused by a poor blood supply to your foot. Removing any dead or infected tissue should prevent the spread of infection and improve your mobility.

Acknowledgements

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