



TOE SHORTENING INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS



This surgical technique has been refined in our centres by Mr Metcalfe who has over 26-years' experience in toe surgery and who has carried out thousands of foot operations. Long / deformed toes may be a source of pain due to pressure lesions like corns and callus. Corrective surgery can mean you can enjoy wearing sandals again without embarrassment and avoid the development of painful corns and callus. The surgery can be performed under a local or general anaesthetic.

HOW IS THE PROCEDURE PERFORMED?

The procedures involve safely removing bone from the toe/s to effect the desired shortening. Normally an internal clip or implant is inserted permanently inside the toe. We aim to achieve the classic "staircase" stepdown to the toes; making shoe-fitting much easier. Mr Metcalfe has over 26-years surgical experience in foot surgery having corrected thousands of toe deformities. He has published extensively in the field of foot surgery and lectured nationally and internationally. During your consultation we will cover the condition, how the correction is undertaken, rehabilitation, post-surgical recovery requirements and the risks of the surgery. Further x-rays or scans maybe required after your operation.

WHY DO I NEED A CONSULTATION BEFORE SURGERY?

Before we can make any decisions, we need to meet so that we can understand your foot problem and hear what it is that you would like to achieve from your foot operation. Mr Metcalfe will explain in detail the options available to you for your toes. Mr Metcalfe will examine your feet to check things like your circulation and nerve supply. He will carefully assess your joints to find out why you have toe problems and what might be the best solution for you. Sometimes it is necessary to obtain an x-ray of your foot to look at the position of bones inside the foot.

HOW IS THE OPERATION PERFORMED?

The operation will be explained in detail including what you need to do before surgery and what to expect on the day of your operation. Here is a brief description of the two types of surgery.

TOE SHORTENING WITH "K-WIRE"



The procedure involves removing a precise amount of bone from one or both joints within the toe to obtain the desired toe length. Once this is achieved a wire is placed through the toe to stabilise the joints. This wire remains in place for 4-6 weeks when it is removed in outpatients. Some patients do not like the idea of the wire sticking out of their toe(s). Compared with the implant surgery there is a small increase in the risk of infection and of the toe bone not healing together. The operation takes approximately fifteen minutes per toe. The operation is significantly less costly as no implants are required. There are also significantly less risks of complications with this technique.



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IMPLANT TOE SHORTENING

Post-Op X-ray



Again, the operation begins in a similar way, with a precise section of bone being removed to obtain the correct toe length. Next the implant is inserted into the joint and this securely joins the toes together.

No metal pins or wires protrude from the toe and the implant remains within the toe and does not normally need to be removed. The operation takes approximately thirty minutes per toe. Patients must limit their walking for three weeks after surgery. The operation is more costly because of the cost of the implants which have been especially designed for this operation.

ANAESTHETIC OPTIONS

The procedure is usually performed under local anaesthetic which is a safe and effective way to have your operation pain free and with no aftereffects of a general anaesthetic. If you prefer to be asleep for your surgery this is easily arranged in advance at either Mr Metcalfe's Harley Street practice or Spire Hospital. Please note only procedures under local anaesthetic are carried out at our Chingford centre.

CAN THE OPERATION CORRECT BUCKLED TOES?

Yes, if you have a buckle or twist in the toe, this can be corrected in most cases at the same time as correcting the length of the toe.

CAN THE BIG TOE BE SHORTENED?

Yes, although a slightly different approach the big toe (hallux) can be corrected

YOUR RECOVERY

- You will not be able to drive home after your operation
- You will need to rest after your foot surgery avoiding walking, sports, driving
- Your stitches can be removed between 10-14 days.
- Your new toes may take a few weeks to fully settle but most patients are back to normal comfort shoes within three weeks.
- For patients having the implant surgery a period of three weeks rest is advised
- For patients having toe shortening with "K"-wires a period of six weeks rest is advised

WILL I FEEL ANY PAIN DURING THE OPERATION?

You should not feel any pain at all during the procedure as your toes will be numbed with a local anaesthetic.

IS SURGERY ESSENTIAL?

The decision to have surgery should be carefully considered by you taking into consideration the amount of problems you have with your toes and the risks of surgery.



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HOW LONG BEFORE MY TOE IS HEALED AFTER TOE SHORTENING?

You will be well on your way to recovery within three weeks after this operation, but the swelling will take several weeks to fully settle. Most patients find the toes are completely healed within three to four months.



WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF THE OPERATION?

The risks of surgery include:

• INABILITY TO COMPLETE OPERATION WITH IMPLANT	• FRACTURE OF THE BONE DURING IMPLANT INSERTION
• NEED FOR REVISION SURGERY (CHARGED)	• POOR ALIGNMENT OF THE TOE
• BLEEDING`	• LOSS OF PART OF TOE
• CHRONIC PAIN OFTEN REFERRED TO AS CRPS	• BLOOD CLOTS IN LEG / LUNG
• INABILITY TO SITE IMPLANT	• ELEVATION OF TOES / POOR TOE POSITION
• FAILURE OF THE BONE TO HEAL	• SWELLING
• PAIN	• POOR TOE POSITION / ALIGNMENT / LENGTH
• IMPLANT FAILURE	• NEED TO REMOVE IMPLANT