

Post-Operative Hallux Valgus Advice Sheet

Your big toe joint will be stiff after the surgery. You will need to exercise the joint to get the movement back. Follow these instructions very carefully and carry out the exercises at each stage of your recovery. If you are unsure of any advice, please call.

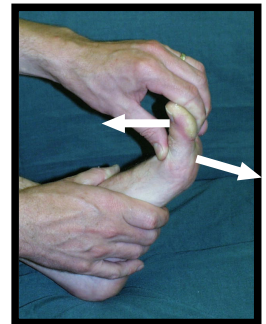
Days 1-3 after surgery: Despite being painful you should try to wriggle your big toe for a few minutes every hour. Gentle walking for *essential* manoeuvres, such as going to the toilet and back, is permitted

3-7 days: Continue the wriggling! Now the *majority* of post-operative pain has subsided you can start to put weight on the foot more often (i.e. 10 minutes in an hour period, or more if you can tolerate it). Place your foot on the ground flat, and spread the weight evenly across the whole of the foot. *Gently* push off the big toe.

Footwear: You should change to a roomy 'trainer' or 'surf sandal' at around 2 weeks following surgery. You may need to obtain a size larger than normal or remove the laces. It will feel tight and probably a little sore compared with your post-op shoe, but it will actually help to contain the swelling.

Walking: From 1 week, you should increase your walking "to tolerance". *Carefully* increase the push-off with the big toe. It is normal for this to still be a little uncomfortable. The foot will be more swollen towards the end of the day, and it will take **many months for the swelling to disappear altogether**. After 4 weeks try to concentrate on walking as normally as comfort will allow under your own steam. Whenever you are sitting or resting you should still put your foot up, level with your hip and keep wearing the compressive tubular bandage up to your knee for the first 4 weeks.

Joint Exercises: You may start to passively exercise the joint by moving it upwards and downwards using your fingers after the first week. Cross your foot over the opposite knee so that you can reach the big toe. Hold the big-toe joint with one hand and move the big toe up and down with the other. Push the toe up and down to the point where it is uncomfortable, then push a little more and hold for 30 secs. - this can be difficult to do yourself and you may need someone to do this for you. Do this for 5 minutes, 3-4 times a day. It is normal for this exercise to be mildly painful – but you are doing the joint good and it will help towards getting the full movement in the toe back. Doing this straight after a warm bath may help (fully immersing the foot for bathing is permitted after 10 days, barring complications).



From 2 weeks after surgery

Active exercises: Sit on a bed with your feet up and your back against the wall. Bend your knee, pulling your foot up towards you so you can reach the foot easily. Loop a bandage or large elastic band around the big toe. Pull your toe upwards with the band and then push down against the band. You should perform repetitions in stages. Start with 10 pushes, 3 times/day for the first week, increasing by 10 each week up to 40 pushes, 3 times/day. When you have regained the same "power" as your other big toe you may stop exercising (usually around 2-3 months following surgery)



Weight-bearing pushes: Stand facing a wall. Place your recovering foot one step backwards, steady yourself against the wall with your hands and start lifting the heel of your recovering foot off the ground while keeping the big toe flat on the floor. Stop at the point of discomfort and push down on the ground with little bouncing-like movements. Do 20 bounces, 3 times a day. In order to recover the full movement in the joint it is necessary to push the limit of your big toe joint - this will be uncomfortable and will make the joint ache for a short while afterwards.

You can return to your normal daily activities (including exercising) after 10 weeks, although exercising the joint from time to time may still help.

Form HVI

A small number of people who have surgery never get *all* the movement back in the joint, although this may not be of great consequence for day-to-day activity. You will greatly increase your chances of a successful result if you follow these instructions carefully.

Thank you for your co-operation