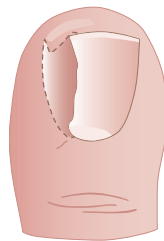


What is an ingrown toenail?

An ingrown toenail is one where the edge or corner of the nail grows down and cuts into the adjacent skin of the toe, leading to the toe becoming red, swollen and tender (inflamed).



The big toe is most likely to be affected, either on one or sometimes both sides. If left untreated, the inflammation can spread to the rest of the toe and the area becomes infected and may ooze pus. It becomes painful when walking and may smell unpleasant.

The most common reasons for ingrown toenails are:

- tight-fitting shoes which cause the toes to be compressed together and put pressure the nail
- improper trimming of toenails which cause the corners of the nail to dig into the skin. Nails should be trimmed straight across, not rounded
- injuries near the nail, stubbing the toe, having the toe stepped or anything that causes the nail to be damaged repetitively (such as playing soccer).

If self-care and medical treatment are not sufficient then surgery will be needed to remove the nail.

There are different operations to correct ingrown toenails. The most successful operations are:

- wedge resection - removing the edge of the nail with its nail bed, resulting in a slightly narrowed nail
- nail extraction and Phenotherapy - removal of the nail and destruction of the nail bed by using a chemical (phenol).

If you have any problems relating to your child's operation that are not mentioned in this leaflet, contact your GP or call 01273 696955

Day Level 7 Daycase Ext. 2382

Night Level 8 Surgery Ext. 2552

For more information you may find these websites on the Internet useful:

emedicalhealth - Self-care and medical treatment
www.emedicinehealth.com/ingrown_toenails/article_em.htm

Ingrown Toenail surgery

www.ingrowntoenailsurgery.net/news.html

Patient UK

[www.patient.co.uk/health/Ingrowing-Toenails-\(Ingrown-Toenails\).htm](http://www.patient.co.uk/health/Ingrowing-Toenails-(Ingrown-Toenails).htm)

Royal Alexandra Children's Hospital
Eastern Road, Brighton, BN2 5BE

Telephone 01273 696955

This leaflet is intended for patients receiving care in Brighton & Hove or Haywards Heath



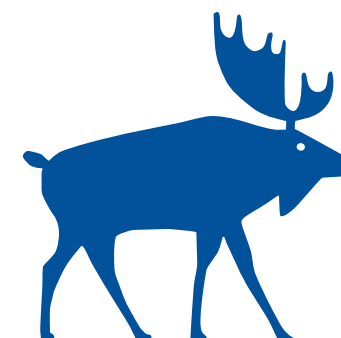
Produced by Ms A van der Avoirt, Sr. Helene Smith
Issued by: Department of Paediatric Surgery & Urology
Ref number: 253.1
Publication date: May 2021. Review date: May 2024



© University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust
Disclaimer: The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is in no way intended to replace professional clinical advice by a qualified practitioner.



Surgical correction for ingrown toenail



Royal Alexandra Children's Hospital
Department of Paediatric Surgery & Urology

Parental Information Leaflet

Before the operation

The operation to remove the toenail will depend on how ingrown it is, whether one or both sides are affected and whether there is evidence of infection. The Doctor will discuss with you at the Outpatients appointment the most appropriate operation for your child. The operation can be undertaken as a day case procedure.

To reduce the risk of infection:

- wash the child's affected foot, twice a day with soap and water. Keep the foot clean and dry during the rest of the day
- change socks daily and after sport activities
- do not wear tight-fitting shoes. Consider wearing sandals, if possible.

After the operation

Your child will be taken to the recovery room until ready to return to the ward. Every child is different some are awake and others are fast asleep when they return to the ward.

An operation and anaesthetic can affect children in different ways. Your child may feel unwell for several hours afterwards. A nurse will be present to monitor their progress.

Your child can start drinking when awake. A snack box will be provided with food and drink.

Discharge home depends on your child's recovery and can be from about two hours after surgery. Before going home we like your child to be tolerating fluids, to be comfortable and be able to walk a short distance.

We advise that your child has a quiet evening at home when discharged from hospital.

Pain relief (at home)

Your child may be uncomfortable for a few days after the operation. We will give you medicine to take home. Your child should take at least:

- Paracetamol (tablets or Calpol) 4-6 hourly for 4 days
- Voltarol tablets twice a day for 2-4 days (reduces swelling).

An antibiotic such as Augmentin may be prescribed for 5-7 days if there is evidence of infection at operation.

Possible problems

Having a toenail removed is a common and generally safe procedure, the problems that can occur include:

- Infection - antibiotics are given to reduce this risk especially if Infection might have been present prior to the operation
If your child has a constantly raised temperature, contact your GP
- bleeding - Regular bleeding through the bandages (contact your GP)
- if the nail bed is treated with phenol, inflammation can develop inside the toe causing the foot to swell. This is painful but rare. Your child may require anti-inflammatory drugs for the swelling.
- Although your surgeon will be experienced at performing this procedure, phenol treatment does not always work and your nail may grow again.

Care of the wound (at home)

- Your child should keep their foot elevated at all times when sitting - wear open toe sandals and no socks when possible.
- Your child will have a dressing and bandage on their foot which should be kept clean and dry to reduce risk of infection.
- The dressing should be soaked off and re-applied by a nurse 3 days after the operation and then changed on alternate days. We will give you some dressings for the nurse to re-apply.

Dressing change

An appointment for the dressing change will be organised before your child leaves the hospital.

Date and time booked for change of dressing on:

The Children's Community Nursing Team or the practice nurse at your GP can remove the dressing after 3 days.

The stitches need to be removed about 10-14 days after the operation. The nurse undertaking the dressings will advise.

- Your child may have no stitches
- Your child may bathe as normal, but you should keep the dressing dry
- Your child may go back to school after a week, but should be off all sports and rough games for at least 4-6 weeks, unless otherwise instructed.

Please expect that the new nail will be an odd shape and colour, and won't look the same as your other toenails.