

Post Surgery Instructions
Subtalar Joint Fusion

General Facts

- The goal of this surgery is to reduce pain, swelling, and dysfunction from subtalar joint arthritis. This operation is designed to fuse the joints at the back of the foot and lock those affected bones together.
- Up and down movement (dorsiflexion and plantarflexion) will not be affected. However, side-to-side motion will be eliminated completely.
- Screws are inserted into the heel bone to hold the joint together while it heals. Once the bone heals, the screws are not necessary. However, unless they are bothersome, they can be left in without any problems.
- You will not be allowed to walk on the foot for 6 weeks after the surgery.

Post Surgery Course

Day 1

- The foot will be wrapped in a soft cast with lots of padding and an elastic bandage. If for any reason your splint is uncomfortable or too tight, remove the ace wrap, loosen the padding, and re-apply to your comfort level.
- It is important to ice and elevate the foot, take pain medication, and rest as needed.
- Do not get the splint wet.
- Do not bear any weight on the operated foot.

Day 4

- Pain should be better after the 3rd day. If your pain has worsened since day 3 or you have a fever and/or chills, please call the office.
- Wiggle toes in splint as tolerated.

2 Weeks (approximately)

- First post-operative visit.
- Your splint will be taken off and your sutures will be removed.
- You will be placed in a boot with your foot in a neutral position to prevent a large range of motion. You may remove the boot during sleep.
- If the incision is healing well, you may get the foot wet in the shower 2-3 days after your post-operative visit.
- Continue non-weightbearing precautions with the use of crutches, a Roll-A-Bout knee scooter, or wheelchair.

6 Weeks

- Progress weight bearing to full weight bearing as tolerated. Add 20 lbs every other day as tolerated until you are full weight bearing.

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- Wean off crutches.

12 Weeks

- Wean out of the boot and into a supportive tennis shoe.
- Increase activity as tolerated.