
POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

After Your Bunion Surgery

You have had bunion correction surgery. Recovery takes time and your cooperation is essential to a great result. Please read these instructions completely and keep them for reference. The bones and soft tissues need 6–8 weeks to heal, and full recovery can take 3–6 months.

Weight Bearing & Activity

- Wear the surgical shoe or boot at ALL times when standing or walking — including bathroom trips at night
- Use crutches, walker, or knee scooter as instructed
- Heel-only weight bearing unless told otherwise
- Elevate the foot ABOVE heart level as much as possible for the first 2 weeks (this is the #1 thing that reduces pain and swelling)
- No driving until cleared by Dr. Lyons (typically 4–6 weeks if the right foot)

Dressing & Incision Care

- Keep the surgical dressing clean, dry, and intact until your first post-op visit
- Do NOT remove, loosen, or 'peek' under the dressing — it is holding the toe in the correct position
- Cover the foot with a plastic bag taped at the calf for showering
- No baths, soaking, swimming, or hot tubs until cleared (usually 4–6 weeks)

Pain & Swelling Control

- Take pain medication as prescribed — do not wait until pain is severe
- Ice the ankle and lower leg (NOT directly on the dressing) for 20 minutes every 1–2 hours while awake for the first 72 hours
- Expect significant swelling and bruising for 2–8 weeks — bruising may travel down to the toes
- Swelling can persist for 3–6 months and is normal

Blood Clot Prevention

- Move your non-surgical leg and ankle frequently
- Gently wiggle the toes of the operated foot every hour while awake
- Stay hydrated and avoid prolonged immobility
- Take any blood thinner exactly as prescribed

Typical Recovery Timeline

- Week 1–2: First post-op visit, dressing change, sutures may stay in
- Week 2–6: Continue surgical shoe, gradual increase in walking
- Week 6–8: X-rays to confirm bone healing; transition to supportive athletic shoe
- Month 3–6: Return to most activities, swelling continues to resolve

Call our office immediately if you have:

- Calf pain, swelling, redness, or warmth (possible blood clot)
- Shortness of breath or chest pain (call 911)
- Fever over 101°F or chills
- Foul-smelling drainage, soak-through bleeding, or a dressing that has come loose
- Numbness, blue or white toes, or severe uncontrolled pain

Your role in a great outcome

- Keep the foot elevated — it is the most important thing you can do
- Do not 'test' the foot by walking without the surgical shoe
- Attend every follow-up appointment, even if you feel well
- Call 662-449-3663 with any questions or concerns