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Orthopaedic Foot and Ankle Surgery

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Bunion +/- Hammertoe Surgery.....After the first 2 weeks.....What Happens Next?

Overview: You will advance into an oversized running shoe and gradually start getting back to activities of daily living and light sporting activity over the next 4-8 weeks.

Specific Instructions:

- 1) After 48 hours, you may take a quick shower and wash your incision, but **DO NOT** soak your foot. Stay out of hot tubs, pools, lakes, etc for 1 month. Shower time is the only time you will be briefly barefoot for the next month. Your bones are healing and need support.
 - 2) **DO NOT** put lotions, antibiotic creams, vitamin E on your incision.
 - 3) Please wear a loose fitting cotton tube sock. **NO** nylons, tight fitting anklets or socks for 4-6 weeks, they will force your toe position.
 - 4) Within 48 hours following suture removal, get fit for a *temporary* oversized running shoe. If you wish, Schuler Shoes will assist you. Usually the shoe fit is 1/2 to 1 size longer to accommodate your post op swelling and your new foot. There is increased width with the slightly longer shoe, you usually do not need an increased width. The reason we have you advance into a flexible running shoe is to help the toes passively start to move and prevent post op stiffness. You will not be able to actively move your toes this early in the recovery.
- With hammer or clawtoe surgery, the joint within the toe is permanently "stiffened" to prevent recurrence, do not try to move these joints.
- 5) Advance your activity about 25% more per week. You have been inactive with your foot elevated for 2 weeks almost 100% of the time. If you are not moving from point A to B, still try to keep your foot up, you will notice more swelling as you become more active. **DO NOT** be surprised with fatigue, we have kept you on the coach with foot elevation for 2 weeks.
 - 6) You can ice your foot now. Make sure you have a cloth or buffer between your skin and ice.
 - 7) Most people feel they can start driving at week 3. Make sure you feel comfortable enough to "slam your foot on the brake" if necessary.

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8) Specific exercise allowance, suggested guidelines:

WEEK 3-4: Stationary bike, weight machines as long as you are NOT using your feet to push

WEEK 4-6: Elliptical (mostly flat foot), rowing machine, free weights as long as you are NOT using your feet to push, easy yoga in running shoe

WEEK 6-8: Start going for longer walks for exercise, can pick up pace and distance

WEEK 8-10: Advance to jog and running, this timetable is quite variable

9) Your recovery is not smooth progress everyday. You will have setbacks with changes in pain and swelling depending on activity, weather, foot elevation. With hammer and clawtoe surgery, these smaller toes are usually the last to recover. This is normal.

If you can continue to take the anti-inflammatory (IBUPROFEN) please do so. This will help with your recovery, watch for any gastro-intestinal side effects.

10) Some of your old shoes may not work, most however will still fit. You have a different foot and your old shoes have been deformed by your old foot. You may start to experiment with dress shoes and smaller running shoes 6-8 weeks after surgery. Do not throw any of your old shoes out for 6 months. They need to be comfortable and NOT pushing your toes back into pre-op position if you keep them.

11) Follow up: There is not usually a need for a scheduled follow up. We do want you to call us at week 6 with an update. If you have any questions prior to week 6, *please call us: 952.456.7179.*

We will see you anytime during your recovery if needed. At week 6, you should usually be participating in most activities of daily living. You will still be slightly swollen and in your running shoes, starting to further advance with shoe wear and activity.

Again, If you have any questions during your recovery, please call us:
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