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## Information Sheet

# POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR FOOT & ANKLE SURGERY

### **Ankle Fusion / Mid-foot fusion / Triple fusion / Lapidus Fusion**

- Below knee plaster back slab for two weeks, non weight bearing
- Plaster change at two weeks to full plaster cast - remain non weight bearing
- Plaster cast off at six weeks and x-ray
- Depending on the progress of the fusion may either be left free of plaster cast, go into an Aircast boot or below-knee walking cast
- Further x-rays at four to six weekly intervals until fusion solid

### **Achilles tendon reconstruction surgery using Leeds Keio tape**

- Below knee back slab for two weeks, non weight bearing
- Back slab removed at two weeks
- Stitches removed
- Refer for Physiotherapy to build up to full weight bearing and full range of motion over next four to six weeks

### **Ankle or Foot soft tissue reconstructive procedure e.g. Watson Jones or Brostrum repair / FDL or FHL transfer**

- Below knee plaster back slab for two weeks, non weight bearing
- Change plaster at two weeks to full cast
- Remain non weight bearing for total six weeks
- At six weeks commence mobilisation with Aircast boot and refer to physiotherapy - aim to build up to full range of motion and full weight bearing over next four to six weeks

### **Foot Osteotomy**

- Clinic review after two weeks for plaster change and/or wound check
- Continue weight bearing following this time
- Review at six weeks with plaster cast removed as appropriate and x-ray
- Allow weight bearing out of plaster cast or support shoe providing healing sufficient
- Review at further four to six weeks
- Refer for physiotherapy if problems with stiffness

### **First Metatarsophalangeal Joint Fusion**

- Plaster cast shoe is applied in theatre. Allow plaster cast to dry over 24 hours then allow partial weight bearing
- Change plaster at two weeks to full cast. Remain partial weight bearing for total six weeks
- Review at six weeks with plaster cast removed and x-ray
- Allow weight bearing out of plaster cast providing healing sufficient. If not, then further plaster shoe and x-rays at four to six weekly intervals until fusion solid

### **First Metatarsophalangeal Joint Replacement**

- Weight bearing using Darco heel weight bearing shoe. Review clinic at two weeks for wound check
- Continue using Darco shoe and refer for physiotherapy to start at three weeks (printed leaflet of exercises will be provided)
- X-ray at six weeks. Provided the implant is solid may get back into normal shoes, continue physiotherapy and build up to full weight bearing
- Re-assess at six weeks to see if range of motion of toe has returned. May require manipulation under anaesthetic if this is slow
- Follow-up x-rays yearly

## **Ankle Replacement**

- Below-knee plaster back slab is applied in theatre. Allow plaster cast to dry over 24 hours then allow very light partial weight bearing
- Change plaster at two weeks to full cast. Remain partial weight bearing for total six weeks
- At six weeks check x-ray is taken to ensure that the implants are solid. Assuming no problems commence mobilisation with Aircast boot and refer to physiotherapy - aim to build up to full range of motion and full weight bearing over next four to six weeks
- Follow-up x-rays yearly

## **Toe Correction**

Many toe procedures require the use of a metal pin, known as a K-wire, to stabilise the correction. Weight bearing is usually possible but walking must be flat footed to prevent breakage of the pin. Most pins are removed at four to six weeks. Patients may choose to have this done under a quick anaesthetic as a day case admission, or without anaesthetic in the clinic.

## **Fracture Operations**

Most fracture operations will require the use of a plaster cast or back slab. The majority of cases will be non weight bearing but in some cases weight bearing may be allowed. Your consultant will explain the detailed post-operative course to you.