

Post-Operative Instructions: Cheilectomy [with or without Moberg (phalangeal) osteotomy]

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1. Before you leave the hospital, you will be given a prescription for a pain reliever. This medication contains a narcotic with acetaminophen (Tylenol), so do not take any additional Tylenol. Use the medication as directed when the local anesthetic begins to wear off and then as necessary. You may take Tylenol instead of the prescription medication as the pain starts to dissipate.

2. If you have no history of stomach ulcers, frequent stomach upset, or intolerance to aspirin, I would like you to take 2 aspirin tablets (regular strength) twice each day on a full stomach (*e.g.*, with breakfast and dinner) for 4 weeks. This will help reduce swelling and inflammation in the foot and also aid in the prevention of blood clots. You may substitute Ecotrin (coated aspirin), Bufferin, or Ascriptin.

3. Use the post-operative ('Darco') shoe at all times when walking or standing for 6 weeks. You do not need to wear the shoe while sleeping, although some patients note that it makes them feel more comfortable.

4. You should use your crutches and put partial weight on your operated foot. Gradually increase the amount of weight you apply to the foot over the first two weeks. You may discard the crutches when you feel comfortable walking without them; this can range from seven to ten days after surgery. Excessive standing and walking are not good for your foot for the first two weeks after surgery.

5. When you return home, elevate the leg on some pillows. For the first week be sure to elevate the leg whenever possible. Continue to elevate the leg on pillows when you go to sleep until there is no swelling in the ankle, foot or toes.

6. The dressing applied in the operating room must remain in place for 5 to 6 days. It will be removed at your first post-operative visit and replaced with a smaller dressing so that you may begin motion exercises and physical therapy. Following this visit you should change the dressing daily. The foot must be kept absolutely dry when bathing until the sutures are removed (at your second post-operative visit – 2 weeks following surgery).

7. You should schedule appointments to see a physical therapist 2 times per week, beginning after your first post-operative visit.

8. After your first post-operative visit, you should begin twice daily passive range of motion exercises to guide your great toe into dorsiflexion (towards your ankle) as instructed. After 2 weeks these exercises should be done 5 minutes of every hour when awake. **Important:** If you have had a Moberg (phalangeal) osteotomy performed in addition to the cheilectomy, then you must be very careful **not** to move your great toe into plantar flexion (away from your body, *i.e.*, 'pointing' the foot) for 6 weeks.

9. If you have any of the following call me immediately at the office or via my answering service: calf or lower leg pains that make it difficult to walk; inordinate pain or undue swelling in the foot; bleeding through the dressing; numbness; coldness or tingling in the foot. If you cannot reach me go to the hospital's emergency room (or another hospital emergency room if you prefer) to have the problem checked.