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POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR TOENAIL SURGERY

There are many surgical procedures available for correction of ingrown toenails or thick toenails. Many of these procedures are temporary, and the original problem may recur. The procedure performed on your toenail is permanent, so the nail, or side of the nail, removed should not grow back.

The medication used to prevent nail re-growth causes a chemical burn on the skin around the nail. This skin will turn red and the nail bed will drain. This is normal for this procedure. The toe may even look infected, but it is not-this is the skin's reaction to the medication. **However, if the look of the drainage changes or a strong odor develops, CALL US IMMEDIATELY.**

1. Stay off your feet and keep them elevated as much as possible. If you are on your feet today following the nail removal, you may bleed through the bandages (this is normal). If this happens, reinforce the toe with more bandages and elevate your foot, this should stop the bleeding. If you have excessive bleeding through the bandages, **please call us.**
2. Soak your toe with the bandages in place the day after the nail removal in a mixture of povidone-iodine and warm water for approximately 10-15 minutes. This will allow you to remove the bandages easier when the dressings are wet. Adding povidone-iodine to 1 quart of warm water until it is a light brown color or the color of tea makes the mixture. **Do not use the mixture if you have an allergic reaction to iodine or betadine.**
3. You may soak the toe once per day in the warm water and povidone-iodine mixture for 10-15 minutes. Soak the toe each day only if the toe is still draining. You may gently clean the surgical site with a washcloth and soap and water when bathing or showering. Blot the surgical area dry following bathing or soaking and apply a thin layer of Amerigel, Neosporin, bacitracin, or silvadene cream to the area. Cover the surgical site with 2x2 sterile gauze dressing. If the surgical site is no longer draining, you may apply a 1" band-aid to the toe.
4. Your toe(s) may remain numb for 5-6 hours. If you have pain, take Tylenol or aspirin according to the package directions.
5. Leave the toe exposed to the air as much as possible when at home. Wear sandals or open-toed shoes if possible.
6. If you have any questions or problems, please call the office at (276) 596-9346. If it is after office hours and the site is red, hot, swollen, or you have a fever, please call your primary care doctor or go to the emergency room.