



Spire Healthcare

Treatment summary

Bunion removal operation

What is a bunion?

A bunion is a lump of bone on the knuckle of your big toe. Sometimes the big toe points towards the other toes on the foot (hallux valgus).

Arthritis, or wearing tight or ill-fitting shoes over a period of many years, may increase the risk of bunions. However, they can have other causes. Bunions are more common in women and sometimes run in families.

Exercises and corrective footwear can sometimes help bunions. However, when these non-surgical treatments don't work, surgery can relieve pain and correct the deformity.

Bunion removal is usually done under general anaesthesia. This means you will be asleep throughout the procedure.

The operation can be performed as a day-case, but a night or two in hospital is sometimes required. Your surgeon will explain the benefits and risks of having a bunion operation, and will also discuss the alternatives to the procedure.

About the operation

Your surgeon will make an incision in the top or side of the big toe joint. The exact procedure will vary depending on the type and size of the bunion being treated.

Your surgeon may cut through the joint, remove a small piece of bone and re-align the toe. The joint may be stabilised using screws or tiny wires to keep it in place.

At the end of the operation, the incision will be closed with stitches and your foot will be bandaged or placed in a plaster cast. The operation usually lasts about an hour and a half.

A physiotherapist will visit you after your operation and give you some advice about how to move around safely with your dressing or cast. You may also see the physiotherapist again after your cast or dressing is removed.

Bunion removal is a commonly performed and generally safe operation. For most people, the benefits in terms of improved symptoms are much greater than the disadvantages. However, all surgery carries an element of risk.

Complications specific to bunion removal include:

- the tendons in your big toe can be damaged during surgery and this can affect how well your toe moves
- the nerves in the toe can also be injured and you may find your toe is numb in places

- occasionally, the pain and swelling may be persistent, lasting for a few weeks, or some cases for longer. Some people develop a callus (a hardened area of skin) on the bottom of their foot

It's also important to know that although your surgeon will be experienced at this type of surgery, your bunion may come back.

The chance of complications depends on the exact type of operation you are having and other factors such as your general health. Ask your surgeon to explain in more detail how any risks apply to you.

To find out more about having bunion removal in a Spire Healthcare hospital, please go to www.spirehealthcare.com



Spire Healthcare

Spire Healthcare
PO Box 62647
120 Holborn
London
EC1P 1JH

www.spirehealthcare.com

The information contained in this brochure is not intended nor implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice nor is it intended to be for medical diagnosis or treatment.

Spire and the SS logos are trademarks of Spire Healthcare (Holdings) Limited

SPI-GEN.TS9.A5.0508.T