

What to expect

Expected hospital stay:

Day surgery procedure.

Anaesthetic:

A combination of an ankle block and general anaesthetic is used for the surgery.

Can I walk?

You may walk on your foot immediately after the surgery but you must rest and elevate your foot (23 3/4 hours a day) for 1-2 weeks after the procedure.

Can I shower?

You may shower but keep your dressing dry & intact.

How long does the postoperative sandal stay on?

The sandal must remain on at all times during the first 2 weeks post operatively. After this time the sandal is replaced with a comfortable solid soled shoe.

When can I resume normal activities?

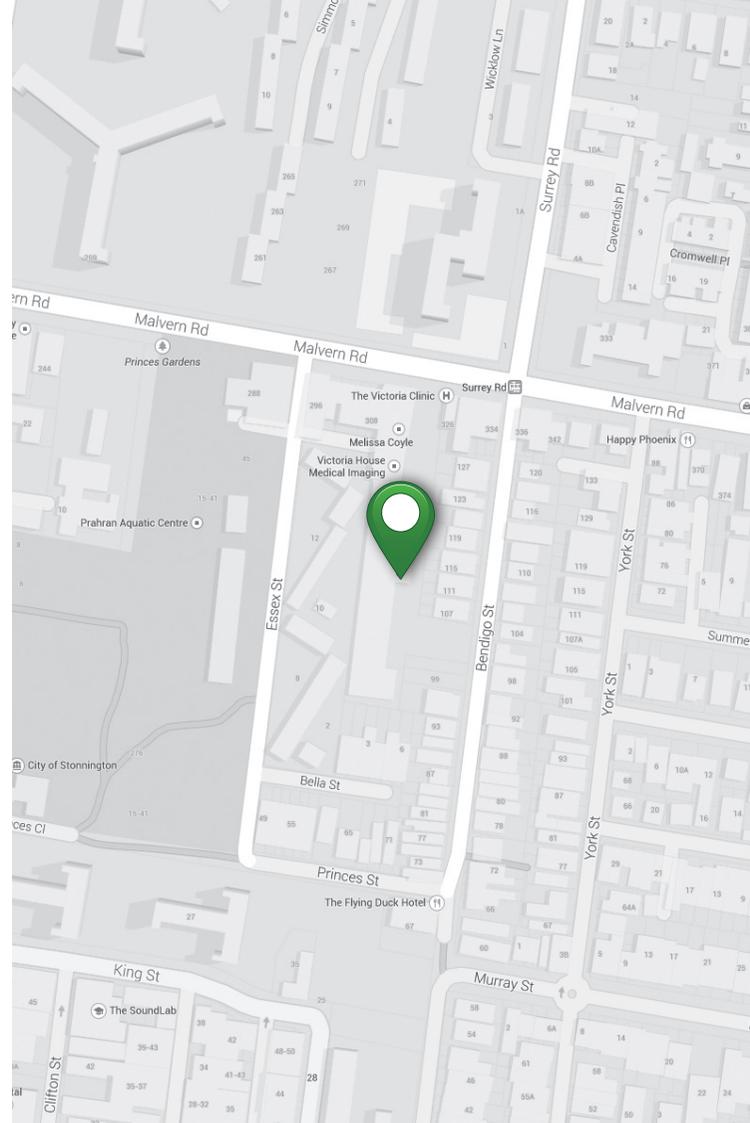
After the two week mark, a slow increase in activity is encouraged. It will take 2-4 months to feel the benefits of the surgery, it may take 1 –2 years to fully settle.

Your first post operative appointment

This will occur 1-2 weeks after your procedure. At this time your dressings are removed and wounds assessed. If your wounds are healed, simple wound care instructions are given. If they are slower to heal, you will be required to see the nurse for a subsequent wound check about one week later.

When can I return to work?

If you have a sedentary job you will need at least 2 weeks off. If you have an active job where you stand or walk you will probably require 1 month off.



Morton's Neuroma



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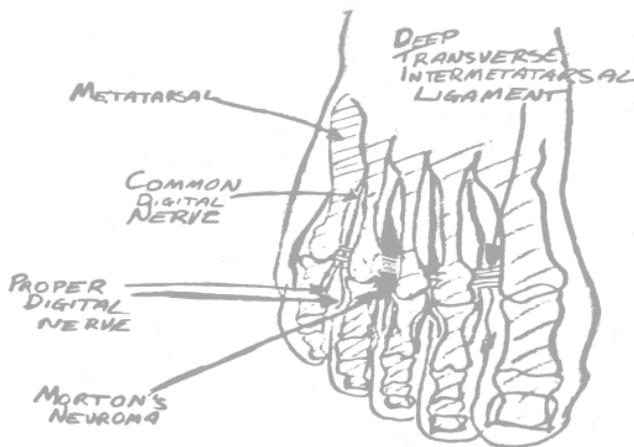
What is a Morton's Neuroma?

A Morton's neuroma is in essence a scarred (common plantar digital) nerve. It can cause a multitude of symptoms but typically intermittent forefoot pain, fullness or tingling numbness.

It is NOT a dangerous condition and therefore treatment is determined by the extent of the symptoms it gives. One may simply tolerate it or use any of a number of non-operative techniques.

These include: change of shoe wear so that there is more room, use of insoles or inserts which aim to slightly lift and separate the metatarsal heads and reduce pressure here.

During episodes of pain injection around the nerve with steroid can settle down symptoms for a month and sometimes longer.



Surgery

Surgery involves excision of this nerve which results in permanent numbness of the web space involved (the sides of two adjacent toes). In the majority of cases this resolves the problem.

I perform the operation under general anaesthetic in association with a local anaesthetic ankle block. The nerve is approached through the top (dorsum) of the foot.

Two adjacent metatarsals are separated and the ligament between their heads is divided. The nerve lies immediately under this ligament. The nerve is then resected well proximal in the web so that when it heals, its scarred end is away from the weight bearing portion of the foot.

The combination of local anaesthesia and a dorsal approach allows the patient to walk full weight bearing in a solid (wooden) soled post-operative sandals immediately after the operation.

Most cases are performed as a day case procedure. The foot then requires elevation and rest until swelling subsides which typically takes five to ten days. Pain relieving medication is required during this phase. From this time mobility progressively increases.

The surgical sandal is exchanged for capacious solid soled shoes after the first post operative visit. Sutures routinely fall out two to three weeks following the surgery. Post operative ache and swelling usually settles over the next four to six weeks although this varies considerably from person to person but can be longer.

This surgery typically resolves symptoms due to the neuroma but it may leave some discomfort.

Clearly not all cases are improved with operation and a few are made worse. Potential problems with all surgery include infection, recurrence of neuroma, as well as anaesthetic and drug reactions.

Placing the incision on dorsum of the foot is important in that it prevents the possibility of a painful scar on the weight bearing surface of the foot.

Alternatives to this procedure:

Conservative Treatment includes: analgesics, anti-inflammatories, shoes, insoles, change in activity and decreasing weight.