

## **First MTP Joint Fusion**

### **What does the operation involve?**

Prior to the operation you will be seen in the Pre-assessment clinic or receive a phone call assessment. This is to ensure that you are fit to have surgery.

The operation can be performed either under general anaesthesia or regional anaesthesia. This decision can be made after discussion with the anaesthetist. The procedure involves making an incision over the affected area, inspecting the two joint surfaces, removing the cartilage and compressing the joint together in an appropriate position with screws.

### **What about pain?**

Whilst you are in hospital you will be monitored and the medical staff will give you pain relief as required and prescribed. You will be given pain relief medication to take home. Advice regarding this will be given by the nursing staff before you leave hospital.

### **How long does recovery take?**

Most patients who have a fusion will be able to go home the same day but it may be necessary for you to stay overnight. The majority of patients have only a padded dressing and bandage to the wound. Very occasionally a plaster cast to the forefoot may be required.

You will be given a special shoe, which helps to off load weight from the forefoot. The physiotherapist will give you instructions on how to wear the shoe and in the use of elbow crutches. An x ray will be taken before you leave hospital or at your nurse led follow up appointment at 7 to 14 days. You are advised to keep the dressing clean and dry until the stitches are removed.

For the first two weeks you are advised to restrict your walking distance to within the house and garden and to elevate the foot as much as possible. Swelling is quite common after foot surgery and this is best managed by elevating the foot on a pillow every night and during the day on at least three different occasions e.g. 11am, 3pm and 6pm for about one hour. This will help to reduce swelling of the foot and promote wound healing,

You will be seen in clinic at 7-14 days when the wound dressing will be changed and the stitches removed. You will be seen in clinic again at 6 weeks and an x ray will be taken. If the x ray is satisfactory you will be able to fully weight bear in wide fitting shoes. Normal footwear will be able to be worn at approximately 3 months.

### **When can I drive?**

Patients having had their left foot operated on will be able to drive an automatic car within two weeks. Those who have had an operation on the right side will be able to drive after about 6-8 weeks. You are advised not to fly after surgery for 6 weeks.

### **When can I go back to work?**

This will depend on the type of work you do. For example if you have a desk job you may be able to return to work after 2-4 weeks if you are able to elevate your foot whilst sitting. If you do manual work and there would be a lot of pressure on the foot then you may need 8-10 weeks off work.

### **What are the possible complications?**

- Infection in the wound
- Prolonged swelling (this can last for 3 to 6 months)
- Nerve injury
- Transfer metatarsalgia (pain in the metatarsal bones of the foot)
- Stiffness of the joint
- Deep vein thrombosis (clot in the vein)
- Pulmonary embolus (clot in the lung)
- Metal breakage (screws used in operation)
- Non-union (failure of joint to fuse)

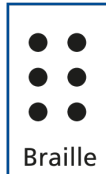
The above complications are rare but can occur.

### **Useful contact numbers**

Orthopaedic pre assessment	0300 614 7778/7147
Day Surgery Unit Heatherwood	0300 614 4130/4131
Main reception Treetops Ward Heatherwood	0300 614 4159
Therapy Office Heatherwood	0300 614 4178
Physio/OT ward office Wexham	0300 615 3329
Ward 1 Wexham Park	0300 615 3010/3012
Booking Centre (appointments)	0300 614 7919 option 1
Orthopaedic post op	0300 6147207

**For a translation of this leaflet or for accessing this information in another format:**

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Please contact (PALS) the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on:

**Frimley Park Hospital**

Telephone: 0300 613 6530

Email: fhft.palsfrimleypark@nhs.net

**Wexham Park & Heatherwood Hospitals**

Telephone: 0300 615 3365

Email: fhft.palswexhampark@nhs.net

<p><b>Frimley Park Hospital</b> Portsmouth Road, Frimley, Surrey, GU16 7UJ</p>	<p><b>Heatherwood Hospital</b> Brook Avenue, Ascot, Berkshire, SL5 7GB</p>	<p><b>Wexham Park Hospital</b> Wexham Street, Slough, Berkshire, SL2 4HL</p>
<p><b>Hospital switchboard:</b> 0300 614 5000</p>		<p><b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.fhft.nhs.uk">www.fhft.nhs.uk</a></p>

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Please remember that this leaflet is intended as general information only. We aim to make the information as up to date and accurate as possible. Please therefore always check specific advice or any concerns you may have with your doctor.

