



**FLORIDA FOOT AND ANKLE**  
SPECIALISTS

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Podiatric Medicine

Foot & Ankle Reconstructive Surgery

## POST OPERATIVE NAIL CARE INSTRUCTIONS

You have had a small operation for the removal of a deformed or ingrown toenail. For the best possible results, please follow these instructions carefully. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask us.

- Your toe will remain numb for anywhere from several hours to several days. This is not unusual and not a cause for concern. It is important to keep activities to a minimum for the first couple of days, if possible.
- You may have some bleeding through your bandage the first day. This is normal and should be expected. Remember, there are no stitches, so bleeding is normal. Please elevate the foot the evening of procedure to minimize bleeding.
- You will notice some drainage and staining on your bandage until the area has healed. This may take up to 4-6 weeks. Some redness and tenderness by the cuticle is to be expected as well.
- After your nail procedures, please leave your dressing on until the next morning. Then, either soak in warm soapy water for 15 minutes mixed with Dreft (baby laundry detergent) or take a bath or shower to get the bandage wet. It is easier to remove after wetting it.
- After you remove the dressing, use either a tooth pick or a cotton tip applicator to remove any debris from the wound by the skin. This is extremely important to do each time you soak in order to help the toe drain normally as blocking the drainage can lead to increased tissue agitation and slow down the healing process. Also, it is helpful to allow the area to “air dry” for about 30 min before putting a bandage back on.
- Next, apply a small thin layer of antibiotic cream to the exposed nail bed (**Bacitracin, Triple Antibiotic, or Neosporin**), and either a gauze pad held in place with paper tape or a fabric strip bandaid. The cream is not a prescription and you can get it at any drugstore or supermarket. Please avoid **use of plastic Band Aids** as they do not allow enough air to penetrate the dressing and this will prolong healing.
- Soak your foot twice daily for 15 minutes twice daily for the first week. After this period, you can switch to soaking once a day until the area stops draining. A shower may count as a soak during the second week.
- You may return to normal activities as soon as you wish. Swimming in clean chlorinated water is permitted, however please use good judgment as ocean water, public pools and hot tubs contain abundant bacteria.
- For discomfort, take Tylenol, Advil, or any other over the counter pain medication. It is extremely rare to require prescription pain medication for this procedure. Wear shoes that are comfortable for you. For the first few days, you should avoid placing pressure on the area by using an open toed shoe or loose shoe. Call the office if you experience severe pain.
- Depending on the level of infection, you may have been prescribed oral antibiotics. If you are not taking antibiotics and signs of infection increase (redness, pain, swelling), please call immediately. Redness and drainage should normally decrease each day.