

What to Expect After Having Claw Toe or Crossover Toe Surgery

For patients of Dr. Lau

What is claw toe or crossover toe surgery?

The surgery straightens the toe with a pin that holds the toe straight.

Why do I need this surgery?

You have a misshapen toe. We do this surgery to straighten the toe and improve your pain.

What to expect after the surgery

On the day of your surgery:

Your foot is wrapped in a bandage and you wear a surgical shoe (special shoe that protects the foot). Do not change the bandage or take off the surgical shoe, even at night.

Expect your foot to be numb for 12 to 24 hours after the surgery. Every 4 to 6 hours, check that your toes are warm to touch and a normal colour. Keep the ends of the pins dry to prevent infection and help the wound heal.

To manage pain:

- Prop up your foot when you are sitting or lying down by putting pillows under your foot. This lessens swelling.
- Take pain medications as you need.

When to call surgeon:

Call Dr. Lau's office at 416 603 6292 right away if:

- your wound is still bleeding the day after surgery
- your foot feels numb or tingling the day after surgery
- your toes change colour (purple, white, or spotted) at any time
- you see yellow fluid coming from the pin
- your toe becomes red and swollen around the pin

On the day after surgery:

You can start walking on the heel of the foot while wearing your surgical shoe.

Do not take off the surgical shoe.

Keep propping up your foot and taking pain medications as you need to manage your pain.

2 weeks after surgery:

You have a follow-up appointment in Fracture Clinic at Toronto Western.

- We take new x-rays to check on your recovery.
- We remove the bandage and sutures (stitches).

Continue wearing the surgical shoe and walking on the heel of the foot. Keep the ends of the pin dry.

6 weeks after surgery:

You have a follow-up appointment in Fracture Clinic at Toronto Western.

- We take new x-rays to check on your recovery.
- We remove the pin.

You can start wearing regular shoes (sneakers).

What side effects can I expect?

Your foot may be swollen for 6 to 12 months after surgery. It may feel throbbing, achy and uncomfortable at the end of the day. This is normal and gets better over time.

For more information:

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