

## LOOKING AFTER YOUR TOE FOLLOWING NAIL SURGERY

Work in a clean area and ensure that any items, such as scissors, are as clean as possible.

Gently remove the dressing. Bathe the foot for 3–5 minutes in a clean bowl of warm salt water. (Alternatively, you may shower but avoid wetting the toe for prolonged periods. You may wish to wash your hair separately in the sink.)

Wash around the toe and gently cleanse it with sterile gauze to help dislodge any debris. Avoid touching the wound at any other time.

After washing the toe(s), dry with sterile gauze and discard it before applying a clean, sterile dressing as shown by the podiatrist.

Do not wrap tape tightly around the toe, as this can restrict blood flow.

You will need to purchase breathable dressings from the pharmacy, as discussed with your podiatrist.

Do not be tempted to sit with the dressing off or walk around without a dressing, as dirt, dust, animal hair, etc., may get into the wound and cause infection, which may delay healing.

Change the dressing every 1–2 days, or any time you see weeping through the dressing. You must continue dressing the toe until it is fully healed.

When the nail bed is dry and there is no mark on the dressing, you may leave your toe uncovered.

Wounds can take up to 3 months to fully heal. Avoid sports and tight shoes until the toe has healed.

### How to apply the dressing

Wash your hands and use clean scissors to cut the dressing.



Make 2 small cuts to create a flap at the top of the dressing



Place dressing ensuring the sterile pad is over the wound and the flap to the top of the toe



Fold the flap over the top of the toe and the remainder of the dressing around the toe, firmly but not too tight

## Is there anything I should look out for?

For the first 1–4 weeks, the area around the nail bed will be red and inflamed. You can expect to see a heavy discharge, and the nail bed will develop a thick yellow or red crust where the nail has been removed. It may be painful, uncomfortable, or bleed. This is a normal inflammatory response to the chemical burn and is not necessarily a sign of infection.

Extreme pain, significant swelling, and redness that tracks up the toe—usually accompanied by thick, smelly discharge—may indicate an infection. This is uncommon within the first week unless an infection was already present at the time of surgery.

**If you are concerned, contact Locala's Community Health and Care Hub: 0300 304 5555.**