

## Nail Surgery

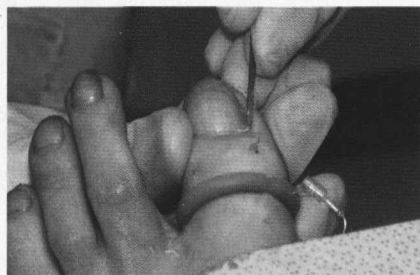
Nail surgery is a common procedure performed by most podiatrists to effectively treat an ingrown toenail – a nail that has pierced (or is pressing against) the adjacent skin of the toe causing pain and inflammation and sometimes infection.

Surgery may be required when an ingrown toenail repeatedly gets infected, is continually painful, the patient is unable to wear shoes or the condition inhibits work, sporting or other activities.

Before surgery is recommended, your podiatrist will explore other conservative treatment options.

## Nail surgery performed by podiatrists

A 'Partial Nail Avulsion' (known as a PNA or nail root and matrix resection) is a minor nail procedure which aims to permanently treat ingrown toenails. The procedure is usually performed in podiatrists' rooms, takes around one hour and the patient is able to walk immediately afterwards.



*The offending portion of the nail is trimmed away*

## What does a partial nail avulsion involve?

Your podiatrist will conduct a complete assessment, taking a medical history, a list of any medications that have been prescribed for you as well as considering any other clinical factors that will determine whether or not this surgery is suited to you. An assessment will generally also include an examination of blood supply to the foot.



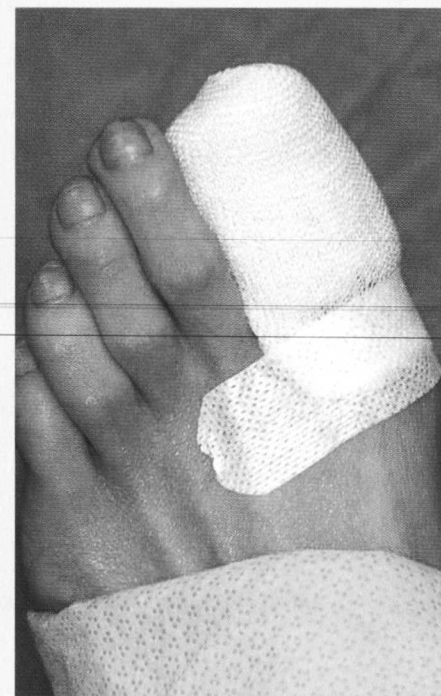
*Only the affected segment of nail is removed, leaving a small area at the base of the nail (underlying the cuticle) to heal after the procedure.*

The procedure itself is performed under local anaesthetic via injection into the toe to numb the area. The anaesthetic will wear off in about two hours.

Once numb, a tight elastic ring called a tourniquet is applied to the toe to control bleeding and the area is prepped to minimise the risk of infection.

The offending portion of the nail is then gently lifted and trimmed away, generally without the toe being cut or stitched. Both sides or the entire nail may be removed this way. A chemical may also be used at this point to assist in preventing nail regrowth.

Once the procedure is completed, the tourniquet is removed and a sterile surgical dressing is applied. The patient is able to walk immediately afterwards, however assistance getting home is strongly recommended.



*Postoperative dressings will require some further attention at home.*

## What happens after the procedure?

Re-dressings at home and a few consultations with your podiatrist may be required over the two to three weeks following the procedure. For the first few days after the procedure pain relief, the use of open toed shoes and activity modification may be necessary, however interference with day to day activities is generally minimal.

## What are the potential complications?

As with any surgical procedure there is some risk of complication, however this procedure is known to be very safe and effective.

The most common side-effects are post-operative infection in the short term and the possibility of regrowth of the nail over time. The risks of infection can be minimised through good post-operative care and your podiatrist will advise and assist with your situation.

## How your podiatrist can help

Regular visits to your podiatrist can manage and prevent ingrown toenails, alleviate pain, and help keep you on your feet and mobile.