

About podiatrists

Podiatrists are highly skilled health professionals trained to deal with the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of medical and surgical conditions of the feet and lower limbs. Podiatrists have completed a Bachelor of Podiatry or higher degree, and are continually upgrading their skills and knowledge through further education and training.

Where can I find a podiatrist?

Contact the *Australasian Podiatry Council* on (03) 9416 3111 or visit www.apodc.com.au and use the *FindaPodiatrist* feature.

Many health funds in Australia provide for podiatry services on their ancillary tables. Government funded services are available through the Department of Veterans' Affairs, some public hospitals and community health centres.

Your Podiatrist talks about

Nail Surgery



A foot health message from
Steel Blue and the
Australasian Podiatry Council
ACN 008488 748

Nail surgery

Surgical procedures are commonly performed by podiatrists to treat recurrent nail problems such as ingrown nail. An ingrown toenail is 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 sufferer is unable to wear shoes or the condition inhibits work, sporting or other activities.

Nail surgery performed by podiatrists

One of the most common nail procedures is partial nail avulsion. The procedure is usually performed in podiatrists' rooms 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?

The procedure itself is generally performed under local anaesthetic via injection into the toe to numb the area. The anaesthetic will most often 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 minimize the risk of infection.

The portion of nail to be removed nail is then gently lifted and resected, generally without the toe being cut or stitched. Both sides or the entire nail may be removed this way. A chemical is used 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.



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.

What happens after the procedure?

Re-dressings at home and a few consultations with your podiatrist may be required following the procedure.

Minimal pain relief medication is required – you can discuss this with your podiatrist.



Postoperative dressings will require some further attention at home.

What are the potential complications?

All nail procedures have been associated with a slight chance of recurrence. Infection whilst the wound is healing can be an issue. Your podiatrist can advise you and manage these and other complications that may occur.

All surgical procedures have some risk of complication; however this procedure is associated with a low rate of complications. Again you should discuss this with your podiatrist.

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.