

## **Post Operative Hammertoe Instructions**

### **Dressing Instructions:**

You will have on a splint band-aid dressing. You may change this dressing yourself as needed. You may get the foot wet once there is no more drainage noted on the band-aids.

Use a flexible or stretchable fabric band-aid to splint the operated toes. This dressing should be worn for 10 days to two weeks as specified by the doctor.

### **Footwear:**

You may get into a “regular” shoe at this point if your swelling allows. The footwear must be supportive (only has forefoot flex and no arch flex.) Many people prefer to wear a sandal similar to a “Birkenstock” sandal with a cork sole and buckle straps. These sandals are supportive and allow the patient to loosen the buckles on the postoperative foot to accommodate swelling. Other patients prefer a tie shoe for support and often purchase a larger size or wider inexpensive athletic or oxford shoe for their postoperative recovery.

### **Frequently Asked Questions:**

Q. How long until I can wear a regular shoe?

A. As soon as it is comfortable. Shoes should be supportive. A shoe that can be bent in half is not supportive enough. A loose fitting athletic shoe or a good sandal works well.

Q. Is it normal to still have drainage on the bandages?

A. Yes, continued drainage is normal from some of the incisions. The majority of the drainage occurs within the first week postoperatively, but small amounts of drainage may be noted on the bandages for two or three weeks.

Q. Is it normal to still have swelling?

A. After 6-8 weeks 80% of the swelling is normally gone. The remaining 20% can last up to 6 months or even a year. How much you are on your feet can be a factor as well. Other factors are diet, weight, circulation, genetics, age, and if you smoke.

Q. Can I soak my foot and what do I use?

A. You should wait to soak the foot or use a hot tub until the doctor gives his permission because the incisions may still be draining and heat may promote swelling.

Q. How long until I can exercise?

A. Activity to tolerance.

Q. Is skin or callus peeling normal?

A. You will notice both skin and callus peeling during your postoperative healing process. Pressure points have been reduced and therefore the calluses slough off.

Q. Is it normal for my toe (s) to feel floppy?

A. It is normal in the first few weeks for the postoperative toe(s) to feel sloppy while healing. The toe (s) should return to normal within a few weeks.