



#### What is wrong with my foot?

The toe or toes have buckled making some of the joint(s) prominent. This causes rubbing on the joints making them red and painful. Hard skin often develops at these pressure sites. If the toes have been in this position for a long time then arthritis will develop and the toes become very stiff.

#### Why has this happened?

Buckling of the toes is quite common. There are many causes including; the presence of a bunion, being flat footed, having toes that are too long, hereditary, or wearing ill-fitting shoes.

#### Do I have to have an operation?

Pads, splints, foot orthoses and special shoes can be used to provide comfort but are unlikely to straighten the toe(s). If the toe is still uncomfortable despite these measures then an operation will usually be recommended.

#### What will the operation involve?

There are several options for surgery and Mr Yates will discuss which is the best option for you. Surgery usually involves fusing one of the joints or removing a section of the joint or a fracture of one of the bones. The corrected position of the toe is often maintained with a permanent special implant. Sometimes a wire is used and then removed in clinic 4 weeks later. The surgery can be performed under general or local anaesthetic. The foot will be bandaged after the operation. Sometimes the surgery can be performed by Minimal Incision Surgery (MIS) techniques.

#### How successful is the operation?

Our most recent independent audit found that 93% of people are very satisfied with the results of their foot operation. This was for a wide range of foot and ankle procedures. People are usually very satisfied with the results of the operation, as they no longer have pain from the toe. They are then able to wear normal shoes again.

**INFORMATION FOR  
PATIENTS HAVING  
HAMMER TOE  
SURGERY**

### Are there any risks associated with the operation?

As with all operations there are risks associated with the anaesthetic. Occasionally some patients may have complications such as infection or recurrence of the condition. The toes can often be swollen for 3-6 months after surgery although this is usually painless.

### What will happen after the operation?

The operation is usually day case. You will be given a special shoe to wear over your bandages and you must wear this whenever you want to walk. The shoe must be worn for 2-4 weeks. If used, the wire(s) will be removed at 4 weeks. You do not need to use crutches. It can take the foot 2- 6 months to fully settle down after surgery depending upon the type of surgery and the number of toes that are operated on.

### What happens when I leave hospital?

For the first 48 hours you will rest in bed with your legs elevated and should take the painkillers prescribed for you. You will be asked to do some foot exercises during this time. The foot will be bandaged. You will be given an Outpatients appointment to return to have the bandages changed at 1 and 2 weeks. You will be able to return to work from 2-4 weeks after the operation, depending on whether you need to stand or walk around a lot for your job. You will not be able to drive until you come out of the post-operative shoe.

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