Benefits, Risks and Complications associated with Podiatric Surgery

This information sheet is provided to assist patients and/or their parents/guardians/carers to weigh up the potential benefits and risks associated with Podiatric Foot Surgery.

Podiatric Surgery is a proven and effective aspect of foot health care. Most Podiatric Surgery is performed on a day-case basis under Local Anaesthesia. This has several benefits for patients including a lower risk than is associated with General Anaesthesia. Early post-operative mobilisation and discharge home reduce the potential for hospital acquired infection. No operation can be deemed to be without risk and it is important that you are aware of this, however small, before consenting to elective (non-emergency) foot surgery.

The mechanism for avoidance of complications is a system of screening and investigation undertaken at various stages of your care. This includes a detailed medical and surgical history, questions about your various body systems and tests and investigations; such as X-rays, blood, urine, circulation and blood pressure. If any of these raises questions about the safety or appropriateness of surgery or concern about possible health problems, further investigations or medical opinion may be sought. It may be decided to avoid surgery or to defer it until the problem is treated or controlled. (A typical example of this would be raised blood pressure).

The possible complications which may be associated with any foot surgery are as follows:-

- Prolonged swelling.
- Haematoma - a painful accumulation of blood within the operation site.
- Thick and/or sensitive scar.
- Loosening or movement of screws or wire used to stabilise bone causing irritation or pain and may require removal.
- Adverse reactions (minor or acute) to injected local anaesthetic or oral medication.
- Infection.
- Loss of sensation, usually temporary though occasionally permanent.
- Delayed healing of soft tissues or bone.
- Circulatory impairment and tissue loss.
- Rarely, thrombosis (blood clot) of deep veins, possibly leading to pulmonary embolism (an acute potentially life threatening medical condition).
- Failure of operation.
- Regional pain syndrome, abdominal pain reflex.
You should be aware that not only are these complications uncommon but can usually be revised or treated and need not necessarily result in permanent disability or pain.

Any possible complications specific to the planned surgical procedure are contained within an information leaflet about that particular type of operation which will be given to you and discussed with you.

If you have particular concerns about any of the above, please do not hesitate to discuss them with the Podiatric Consultant or other member of the Clinical Team.

Comments, concerns or complaints? If you have any comments, concerns or complaints and would like to speak to somebody about them please telephone: 01773 525119

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