

# INGROWN TOENAIL

Caused by the pressure from the inward growth of the nail edge into the skin of the toe, an ingrown toe nail can initially present minor discomfort. Once the edge of the nail breaks through the skin it produces inflammation that may lead to an infection in the adjacent skin and/ or become a reoccurring problem.

Most commonly affecting the large toes, however any toe nail can be affected. Signs and symptoms of an ingrown toenail include redness, pain, swelling and sometimes there may be a clear to yellowish liquid that will drain from the area, if this becomes infected it will become a pus drainage.



## Preventing Ingrown Toenails

Trauma, such as stubbing a toe or having one stepped on can cause a piece of nail to jam into the skin. However, the most common cause of in grown toenails is incorrect trimming.

To prevent ingrown toe nails occurring you should following the following:

### Proper trimming.

Cut toenails in a fairly straight line, and don't cut them too short. You should be able to get your fingernail under the sides and end of the nail.

### Well-fitted shoes and socks.

Don't wear shoes that are short or tight in the toe area. Avoid shoes that are loose, because they too cause pressure on the toes, especially when running or walking briskly.

## Non-Surgical Options

For mild cases or if the ingrown toenail has no infection, you can soak your foot in room temperature water (adding Epsom's salt may be recommended by your GP), and gently massage the side of the nail fold to help reduce the inflammation.

Avoid "**bathroom surgery**". Repeated cutting of the nail can cause the condition to worsen over time. If your symptoms do not improve it is time for you to see a foot and ankle surgeon.

## What signs indicate that surgery may be needed?

The need for surgery depends on the severity of the ingrown toenail.

Occasionally the ingrown toenail will resolve itself, however if you experience pain or the ingrown is persistent and reoccurring you should see a podiatrist or orthopedic surgeon.

## Contact us

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# Specific Technique

A new treatment for an ingrown toenail composed of memory alloy has been developed, the Nail It System, the shape memory material.

A great toe block will be used to prevent pain during the procedure. Your ingrown nail will be straightened using tools by Dr Slater. The whole nail will be measured and a Nail It hook will be set up to straighten the nail. Once prepared the hook will be positioned across your toenail and the orthopedic surgeon will slide the hook down the nail to the beginning of the deformity and set the hook.



The simple operation can take between 5-15 minutes



## Potential Complications

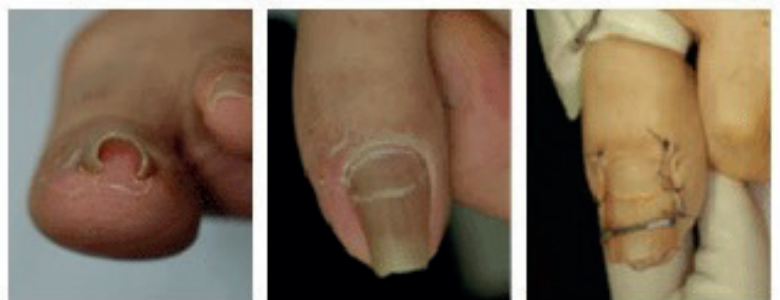
There are complications related to all surgical procedures. These include the risks associated with the anesthesia, infection, damage to the nerves and blood vessels, and bleeding or blood clots.

Common complications specific to the Nail It procedure on an ingrown toenail include the risk of a mild paronychia, a nail disease that is often a tender bacterial or fungal infection where the nail meets the skin. The soft tissue swelling should resolve within **4-5 days**, sometimes with the assistance of soaking in warm water.

You should discuss any concerns with your surgeon.

### Wedge Resection

This is the standard procedure offered for ingrown toenail correction. It results in a smaller nail after the procedure.



### What happens after surgery?

Post-surgery you can expect little pain or discomfort, and you should be ready to be back on your feet the following day.

The newly straightened nail will stick to the skin under the nail while walking. You can expect the nail to continue to grow the right way, decreasing the chances of reoccurrence.

Open toe or loose-fitting, wide toe box shoes are recommended to avoid pressure to the toe while healing.

