



A Guide to your Bunion Surgery with The Private Clinic

Thank you for choosing The Private Clinic for your upcoming surgery.

In this booklet you will find guidance to help prepare you for your upcoming surgery.

Please take your time to familiarize yourself with the content which provides general information on preparing for your surgery and thereafter.

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1. Preparing for your Surgery

Medications:

- BLOOD THINNERS; may need to be stopped prior to your surgery due to the risk of bleeding. Your pre-operative nurse will be able to provide further guidance on this.
- OESTROGEN; *containing HRT or contraceptive medication* (combined pill) must be stopped one month prior to your surgery date. This may be re-commenced 2 weeks following surgery. The reason for stopping this medication is that it increases the risk of developing blood clots.

Please take all other medication as prescribed unless you are told otherwise.

Pre-operative preparation:

Driving:

You will not be able to drive until you have attended your post-operative dressing change appointment, which is generally scheduled 25-30 days following surgery. The only exception is if you drive an automatic car, have had your left foot treated and your insurance provider has deemed it suitable.

Post surgery shoe:

You will be required to wear an open surgical shoe to stabilize the operation site post-operatively which will restrict full movement of the foot. Ensure you wear a shoe of the same height to the untreated foot to maintain body alignment. An 'Evenup shoe balancer' may be purchased, which is placed over your normal shoe to provide alignment.

Dressings:

The foot will be bandaged immediately following surgery. You must keep the dressing dry. You may wear a very loos sock over your bandaged foot. It is advisable to purchase a waterproof shower protector ([Limbo Waterproof Protection for Light Foot Dressing. M20 Fits Ankle 20-25 cm Circumference. Suitable for Shower Only. : Amazon.co.uk: Health & Personal Care](#)).

Footwear:

Once the bandaging is removed (25-30 days following surgery) a wide fitting trainer with a flexible sole, which laces up (Sketchers are ideal or a suitable alternative) will be required. We recommend trying on/ordering one to two sizes bigger than you would normally wear, due to the initial swelling and to avoid pressure around the surgical site. It is also advisable to wear running socks/ankle socks once the bandages are removed.

Chaperone:

A chaperone will be required following surgery to escort you home depending on where you have travelled from. Please avoid using public transport for your safety due to the effects of the anesthetic block. If you are planning on travelling by train outside of London and surrounding areas, to your home address following surgery, please ensure arrangements are made to stay overnight in London prior to travelling. Should this be difficult, please advise a member of our team so we may be able to assist, where possible.

Preparing for Anaesthesia and fasting before surgery:

The procedure involves light sedation.

You must follow the preoperative fasting guidelines provided in our separate information sheet.

2. Day of Surgery

Bunion surgery does not require an overnight stay and is performed on a day case basis. This means you will return home (or nearby hotel) on the same day as your surgery. Surgeries are carried out at our boutique hospital in Fitzrovia Square, London.

Clothing:

Due to the bandaging/dressings, it is advisable to wear loose-fitting clothing that will be easy to get on and off.

Hospital Admission, Chaperones, and travel arrangements:

Patients will be prioritized for the list and the admission times are normally provided by the London team around 5-7 days prior to admission. This is based on the surgical requirements and patient priority. We can request an earlier or later admission time for you, but kindly be advised that this is ***not always guaranteed***.

When you arrive at the hospital a member of the reception team will greet you and your personal details will be checked and confirmed. You may spend a short time in the reception area before being admitted. One of the clinical team will meet and escort you to your allocated bedspace or admission room and complete the necessary checks, observations, and safety questionnaire. Chaperones are not permitted in the operating department but are welcome to wait in the waiting room. Your admitting nurse will provide your chaperone an estimation of the time you will be ready to go home to allow them to plan your transportation needs (generally three hours).

There are several cafes, restaurants, shops, and gardens nearby to the hospital should your chaperone wish to spend some time relaxing or working whilst they wait for you. A member of our Reception or Clinical team will call your chaperone once you are ready for discharge. We advise that you have a chaperone with you overnight.

Mr. Bianchi and the Anesthetist will see you prior to transfer to the operating room to discuss the procedure, anaesthesia, and sign consent forms. The foot will also be marked for surgery.

Anaesthesia:

To perform the surgery, an anesthetic 'block' will be administered to numb the lower leg, so that pain is minimized during the procedure. The block is administered via an injection which some may find uncomfortable. Once the block has been completed, it generally takes around 30 minutes to fully take effect. Prior to commencing the procedure, a cold spray will be administered to the area to ensure the block is working sufficiently.

A mild sedative will be given through a cannula in your hand, to help relax you throughout the procedure, though you will remain aware of the procedure and responsive but may not remember afterwards. You may drift off to sleep at times but will be easy to wake.

The Procedure:

Once in the operating room, final safety checks will be performed. Under X-ray guidance, Mr Bianchi and his team will fracture the bunion site and re-align the bone via two small incisions to the side and top of the foot, close to the big toe. Any sutures placed will be absorbable. Following this, the fracture will be held in place using tapes, padding and bandages.

Immediate Recovery & Discharge:

Following the surgery, you will be transferred via a wheelchair back to your room and cared for by the recovery team. The team will ensure you are monitored throughout and able to mobilize on the treated foot and that it is safe for you to leave.

Our nurses will provide you with any post-operative guidance and medications prescribed by your surgeon to take during the following week to aid your recovery.

You will be offered refreshments and a light snack, and our team will ensure you are well enough to leave the hospital and understand all post-operative instructions, prior to discharge.

The open surgical shoe will be fitted, which at first, may take some getting used to walking in. The area may remain quite numb due to the block until the following day. We advise you to rest for the remainder of the day and try to elevate the foot whenever possible.

Following general anaesthetic or sedation someone stays with you for 24 hours following your procedure, as your judgement may be affected. You may experience nausea, vomiting, drowsiness, and dizziness and need to help you with bathing and dressing, cooking etc during that time.

We advise that you do not undertake any of the following for 24 hours:

- Operate machinery.
- Put yourself in potentially dangerous situations (eg; climbing a ladder).
- Carry or look after children.
- Drink alcohol and/or eat a heavy meal.
- Smoking (or for as long as advised by treating surgeon).
- Sign documents or undertake responsible business as your decision making may be impaired.

3. Aftercare & Post-Operative Recovery

The day following your surgery, you will be called by a member of our nursing team to check how you are feeling following your first night, check you are following the post-operative instructions and answer any questions you may have. A further courteous call will be made one week post-operatively.

Please be aware that Mr Bianchi will over correct the position of the big toe. It is normal to see a large gap between the big toe and the remaining toes. *Please do not worry!* This is intentional and will decrease over time.

The foot may appear swollen, heavily bruised, and misshapen. It is common for the foot to throb, tingle, feel cold and numb in areas. If having Hammertoe surgery, you may notice some bleeding. You may feel/hear a clicking sensation when you walk.

It is important that you allow yourself sufficient time for recovery. Rest is clearly important to this process. However, it is vital that you remain mobile, but listen to your body, and if you feel pain or fatigued, ease off. Build up your activity day by day as you feel able. We advise against retreating to bed as the foot needs to become accustomed to its new position and remaining comfortably active will help reduce the risk of developing deep vein thrombosis (DVT).

Wear a shoe on the unoperated foot that is the same height/thickness as the surgical shoe. This will ensure the body is kept aligned and prevent any joint/muscular discomfort/misalignment.

Do not be disheartened if there are good and bad days, this is completely normal post procedure.

Should you be concerned or if symptoms persist or worsen, please contact your local clinic.

Keep your treated foot elevated when you are seated over the coming weeks, level with your waist or higher. You may remove the surgical shoe when seated. An ice pack can be applied to ease discomfort and swelling.

Please take the analgesia provided at discharge as prescribed. Arnica tablets may also help reduce bruising (3 tablets twice a day for one week leading up to surgery and 5 tablets three times a day, for 4-6 weeks post-operatively).

Dressing change:

Around 25 days after surgery, you will attend your local clinic for a dressing change. ***Please bring your trainers and socks with you to this appointment.*** We will remove all dressings and check the wound sites. You will be shown how to re-dress the foot at home as will be required to tape the bunion site into position yourself for a further 2 weeks (sometimes longer if indicated). You will no longer be required to wear the surgical shoe, wearing your trainers instead.

Surgical review appointment and Post-operative X-ray:

Review with Mr Bianchi will take place approximately 6 weeks post-operatively. If seeing Mr Bianchi in London or Bournemouth an x-ray will be performed at that time. **For patients attending to see Mr Bianchi in one of our other regional clinics, please attend for an x-ray of the treated area prior to the surgical review (can be performed anytime following 4 weeks post-operatively) and bring the image with you to the appointment.** Dependent on imaging results, you may be required to continue with taping of the foot for a period of time.

Important points to remember:

The bone has been fractured and you may therefore experience symptoms for several months afterwards, even after the immediate 6 weeks post operative phase has passed. Please do not be disheartened or worry that the healing process is prolonged.

Some common complaints that can be experienced include:

- ***Stiffness/Discomfort***
- ***Discoloration to the foot***
- ***Tingling/Numbness***
- ***Pulling sensations***
- ***Swelling***
- ***Nerve type pain such as pins and needles or prickling sensations***

Due to individual responses, a few patients may require physiotherapy to help promote flexibility and strengthen the foot after surgery. Mr Bianchi will advise on this and required exercises at your surgical review appointment.

Occasionally, patients may experience residual swelling and stiffness for many months following surgery and not be able to wear their everyday footwear during this time.

The foot may not sit flat on the floor, and/or the big toe may point upwards. The whole alignment of the foot may appear changed. In time this will reduce. Patients may be advised to use a silicone toe separator for a short period after your surgical review appointment with Mr Bianchi, to encourage toe alignment in the early stages of their recovery.

After 60 days you may recommence sports if comfortable to do so.

4. Patient Outcomes and Experience

Your feedback is important to us; we will use it to celebrate what we are doing well, share learning, replicate successful initiatives where appropriate and make improvements where you think we could do better. Feedback will be requested at point of discharge, and a QR code provided should you prefer to complete this at home.

As an Independent Provider of surgery, The Private Clinic are legally bound to provide surgical outcome data from the patient's perspective, for publication on the Private Healthcare Information Network; an independent, government mandated organisation who publish performance and fees information. We engage a third-party provider; Picker HWA to collect the data on our behalf and who we will request your participation in our patient outcome surveys pre-operatively and again at six months' following your surgery. Results of the surveys not only help us to gain an overall understanding the success of your surgery but help to influence improvements in our clinical practices and service delivery and enable us to provide honest and transparent information to prospective patients considering surgery.



Our regulators, the Care Quality Commission are keen to receive feedback directly from patients regarding their experience too, albeit good or bad, to better understand the quality of care received at The Private Clinic. Feedback can be provided through their website at <https://www.cqc.org.uk//give-feedback-on-care>