Curled Fifth Toe

A curled fifth toe is an inherited condition in which your little toe curls under the toe next to it and the toenail is pointing outward. In this condition, the little toe bears weight on its side with resulting discomfort and *corns or calluses* (a buildup of dead skin cells over bones that come in frequent contact with hard surfaces). These problems, if painful or troublesome, can be corrected with surgery. This is an *elective surgery*, (you can decide whether or not you should undergo the procedure). The surgery may be *cosmetic* (improve appearance), relieve pain or improve function. If surgery is recommended, your caregiver will explain your foot problem and how surgery can improve it. Your caregiver can answer your questions about the potential risks and complications of surgery. After determining that foot surgery is the best way to correct the problem, plans for the surgery can proceed.

Let the caregiver know about health changes prior to surgery. It is best to do elective surgeries when your health is optimal. Be sure to ask your caregiver if there will be limits on walking, work or school. Plan accordingly. You can bear weight immediately but may need to wear a surgical shoe for a few weeks as the toe heals.

The treatment of this condition is surgical and is called a *derotation arthroplasty*. A wedge of skin and bone is removed to uncurl ("de-rotate") the toe and have it point forward like a normal toe.

BEFORE SURGERY

You should be present 1 hour prior to your procedure or as directed by your caregiver. Check in at the admissions desk for filling out necessary forms, if not already registered. There will be consent forms to sign prior to the procedure.

LET YOUR CAREGIVER KNOW ABOUT:

- Allergies to food or medicine.
- Medicines taken, including vitamins, herbs, eye drops, over-the-counter medicines and creams.
- Use of steroids (by mouth or creams).
- Previous problems with anesthetics or numbing medicines.
- A history of bleeding problems or blood clots.
- Any previous surgery.
- Other important health problems, including diabetes and kidney problems.
- The possibility of pregnancy, if this applies.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- You can bear weight immediately, but will need to wear a bandage, a splint and sometimes, a surgical shoe for a short time following surgery.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort or fever as directed by your caregiver.
- Elevate your foot above the level of the heart as much as possible to limit swelling.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- There is increased bleeding (more than a small spot) from the wound.
- There is redness, swelling or increasing pain in the wound.
- Pus is coming from wound.
- You have an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C).
- There is a foul smell coming from the wound or dressing.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You develop a rash.
- You have difficulty breathing.
- You have any allergic problems.
- You have an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C), not controlled by medicine.

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