Ingrown Toenail

An ingrown toenail occurs when the sharp edge of your toenail grows into the skin. Causes of ingrown toenails include toenails clipped too far back or poorly fitting shoes. Activities involving sudden stops (basketball, tennis) causing “toe jamming” may lead to an ingrown nail.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Soak the whole foot in warm soapy water for 20 minutes 3 times per day.
- You may lift the edge of the nail away from the sore skin by wedging a small piece of cotton under the corner of the nail. Be careful not to dig (traumatize) and cause more injury to the area.
- Wear shoes that fit well. While the ingrown nail is causing problems, sandals may be beneficial.
- Trim your toenails regularly and carefully. Cut your toenails straight across, not in a curve. This will prevent injury to the skin at the corners of the toenail.
- Keep your feet clean and dry.
- Crutches may be helpful early in treatment if walking is painful.
- Antibiotics, if prescribed, should be taken as directed.
- Return for a wound check in two days or as directed.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- An oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C) develops, or as your caregiver suggests.
- You have increasing pain, redness, swelling or heat at the wound site.
- The toe is not better in 7 days.

If conservative treatment is not successful, surgical removal of a portion of or the entire nail may be necessary.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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