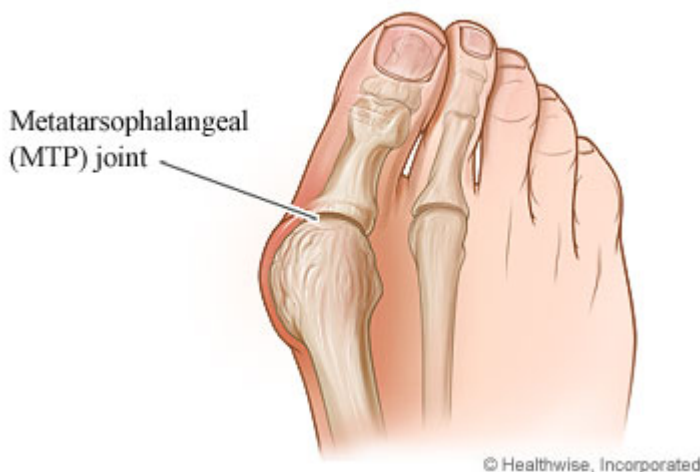


Bunion Removal: Before Your Surgery



What is bunion surgery?

Bunion surgery (bunionectomy) repairs an area of enlarged bone or tissue near your big toe. The enlarged area is called a bunion. It forms on the joint where your big toe joins your foot. The surgery may also help straighten your big toe.

Your doctor will make one or more small cuts near your toe joint. These cuts are called incisions. The doctor will remove small pieces of bone and may straighten your toe. This is done by cutting the bone and setting it in a new position. Your toe may be held in place with pins, screws, wires, or staples. These may stay in your toe. Or they may be removed after a few weeks. The surgery will leave scars that fade with time.

The surgery may make walking easier. It may reduce stiffness, pain, or swelling in your toe joint. It may also improve the way your toe looks.

Your doctor will give you medicine to help you relax and to numb your foot before the surgery starts. Or you may get medicine that makes you sleep during the surgery.

You will probably go home on the day of your surgery. If your surgery is more complex, you may need to spend the night in the hospital.

How soon you can put weight on your toe depends on how complex your surgery is. It may take 6 weeks or longer before swelling goes down and you have healed enough to return to your normal routine. You may have some swelling and pain for as long as 6 months to a year.

How do you prepare for surgery?

Surgery can be stressful. This information will help you understand what you can expect. And it will help you safely prepare for surgery.



Preparing for surgery

- You may need to shower or bathe with a special soap the night before and the morning of your surgery. The soap contains chlorhexidine. It reduces the amount of bacteria on your skin that could cause an infection after surgery.
- Be sure you have someone to take you home. Anesthesia and pain medicine will make it unsafe for you to drive or get home on your own.
- Understand exactly what surgery is planned, along with the risks, benefits, and other options.
- If you take a medicine that prevents blood clots, your doctor may tell you to stop taking it before your surgery. Or your doctor may tell you to keep taking it. (These medicines include aspirin and other blood thinners.) Make sure that you understand exactly what your doctor wants you to do.
- Tell your doctor ALL the medicines, vitamins, supplements, and herbal remedies you take. Some may increase the risk of problems during your surgery. Your doctor will tell you if you should stop taking any of them before the surgery and how soon to do it.
- Make sure your doctor and the hospital have a copy of your advance directive. If you don't have one, you may want to prepare one. It lets others know your health care wishes. It's a good thing to have before any type of surgery or procedure.

What happens on the day of surgery?



- Follow the instructions exactly about when to stop eating and drinking. If you don't, your surgery may be canceled. If your doctor told you to take your medicines on the day of surgery, take them with only a sip of water.
- Take a bath or shower before you come in for your surgery. Do not apply lotions, perfumes, deodorants, or nail polish.
- Do not shave the surgical site yourself.
- Wear clothing that is easy to put on and take off. You may have a large bandage on your foot.
- Take off all jewelry and piercings. And take out contact lenses, if you wear them.

At the hospital or surgery center



- Bring a picture ID.
- The area for surgery is often marked to make sure there are no errors.
- You will be kept comfortable and safe by your anesthesia provider. The anesthesia may make you sleep. Or it may just numb the area being worked on.
- The surgery will usually take about 1 to 1½ hours. If you are having both feet done at the same time, it may take 2 to 3 hours.

When should you call your doctor?



- You have questions or concerns.
- You don't understand how to prepare for your surgery.
- You become ill before the surgery (such as fever, flu, or a cold).
- You need to reschedule or have changed your mind about having the surgery.

Where can you learn more?

Go to <https://www.healthwise.net/PatientEd>

Enter **Y831** in the search box to learn more about "**Bunion Removal: Before Your Surgery**".

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