Cartiva joint resurfacing
For the treatment of degenerative toe joints

Information for patients
Department of Podiatric Surgery
What is osteoarthritis?

Osteoarthritis occurs when there is damage in and around the joints that the body cannot fully repair. This can lead to the bone becoming misshapen and causing pain in the joint. Osteoarthritis of the big toe joint is known as hallux rigidus.

Non-surgical options

Non-surgical treatment will not 'cure' you of arthritis. The aim of these treatments is to manage the pain associated with arthritis.

- Modify activity
- Use of pain killers to ease discomfort
- Correct fitting or specially modified footwear (footwear with a rigid sole or rocker bottom may help, please ask one of the team for advice if needed).
- Joint injections (not curative but may reduce pain)
- Use of protective and cushioning shields, splints/ insoles /braces

Surgery

Surgery is usually a reasonable option if you are experiencing pain and limitation in your daily activities. There are several procedures which may be considered, the clinical team will discuss these options with you. This leaflet discusses metatarsal head resurfacing with the Cartiva implant (insertion of a prosthetic joint spacer). The aim of the surgery is to reduce pain but will not restore a normally functioning joint.
What are the benefits of surgery?

- To reduce pain
- To improve comfort
- Localised procedure which does not involve other joints
- Has the potential to maintain joint movement

What are the specific risks of this operation?

The general risks of foot surgery are outlined in the information booklet 'Risks and complications associated with foot and ankle surgery' which you will have received in your pre-operative information pack.

Specific risks for this procedure:

- Joint stiffness
- Floating toe (the toe sticks up in the air rather than being in line with the other toes)
- Failure, dislocation or fracture of implant requiring its removal
- Implant reaction requiring its removal

Current literature suggests an average of between 8 and 10 years before the implant may need replacing, this varies dependent on your level of activity.
What does the operation involve?

The excess bone is removed from around the joint and the implant is inserted into the metatarsal head. Skin is sutured (stitched) closed and dressed.
How long does the operation take?
The operation usually takes between 25-30 minutes.

Is this a day surgery procedure?
Yes, you can usually go home on the same day.

Will I have a plaster cast?
No

Will I have any screws or pins in my foot?
Apart from the implant there are no other screws or pins used for this procedure.

How long will I need off work?
This will depend on the job you do and the speed of your recovery. For non-manual work we usually recommend approximately 4-6 weeks, for manual work approximately 6-8 weeks.

Who can I speak to if I would like more information about the procedure?
It is important that you understand what the procedure involves before giving consent, this includes any potential risks, benefits and alternatives. Although these will be explained to you beforehand please don’t hesitate to ask either your consultant or one of the team if you have any further questions.
The day of the operation

The operation is performed under a local anaesthetic. An injection is given around the ankle to numb the area. You may eat and drink normally and take your prescribed medications as normal unless otherwise instructed. You will be in the Day Surgery Unit for some time after your operation to allow you an opportunity to rest and recover. We will check your wound and ensure you are comfortable before you go home. Please make sure you have an adult with you for the first 24 hours after the operation.

First 2-4 days

- It is not unusual to experience some pain/discomfort, you will be given painkillers to help with this.
- You must rest completely for 2-4 days restricting your activity to a minimum.
- Ensure you keep your foot elevated when resting.
- You may be advised to keep the circulation going by gently drawing circles in the air or wiggling your toes.
- If you have been given crutches please use them as you have been shown. You may be able to bear a little weight on the heel of the foot.
- You can get about a little more after 3-4 days.

One week after surgery

- You will need to attend for your foot to be checked and re-dressed.
- You may start to do a little more if comfortable to do so (pain may mean you are doing too much).
Two weeks after surgery

- You must attend clinic again for your stitches to be removed, for dissolvable stitches this normally means just trimming the ends.
- You should be able to get around without crutches.
- Your foot will still be quite swollen but you should be able to get a roomy shoe on. You should bring a lace up broad fitting, supportive shoe with you (ideally a trainer).
- Provided that the wound is well enough healed you will no longer require a dressing and you should be able to get the foot wet.
- You will be advised on an gradual return to activity and may also be advised on scar care.

Between 2-6 weeks after surgery

- The foot starts to return to normal and you can resume wearing your normal shoes.
- The foot will still be quite swollen, especially at the end of the day. You may require a review appointment at 4-6 weeks.
- You may be able to return to work but may need longer if you have an active job. If in doubt please discuss this with a member of the team.
- You may return to driving if you can perform an emergency stop. You must check with your insurance company before driving again.
- Whilst normal activity will be resumed, sport should be avoided.

Between 8-12 weeks after surgery

- The foot should continue to improve and begin to feel normal again.
- There will be less swelling.
• Sporting activities can be considered after 12 weeks depending on your recovery.

**Six months after surgery**

• You will attend clinic for a final review between 3-6 months following surgery.
• If swelling is present, it should now be slight and you should be getting the full benefit of the surgery.
• Any residual swelling or discomfort may continue to improve for up to 12 months following surgery.

**Twelve months after surgery**

The foot will now be fully healed.

*Please note if a complication arises, recovery may be delayed.*

**Who do I contact if I would like any further information?**

If you have any questions about the procedure or would like further information please call the podiatry surgery team on:

• **0114 271 4668**

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