

Bunion surgery (Hallux valgus)

Typical symptoms of bunions are redness around the big toe, inflammation of the small fluid-filled sac at the joint, pain, restrictions in the movement of the joint at the base of the big toe, and walking difficulties. Bunion is caused by damage to the joint (arthritis). Arthritis may be inherited, but usually it is caused by repeated trauma to the toe, for example by tight-fitting shoes.

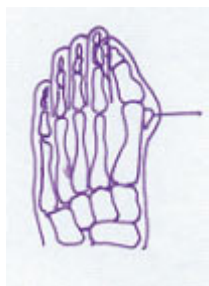
Procedure

In the surgery, the bony enlargement from the inner side of the foot (picture 1) is removed. Additionally, the head of the first metatarsal bone is cut and realigned to straighten the big toe.

The corrected position (picture 2) is secured by a screw or pin, absorbable Biofix rod, or compression sutures and dressings. Operation **is usually performed under spinal anaesthesia**.

Left foot from above

Before the operation (picture 1)



After the operation (picture 2)



Movement

After the procedure, **walk by putting your weight on the whole of the foot** (not only on the outside of the foot or the heel) **for 4 weeks, as allowed by the pain**. Beware of flexing the big toe for 3–4 weeks while walking. Use crutches for a few days or as instructed. Your shoes must have supportive soles, low heels, and be wide at the toe (they must have sufficient space for your toes). The operation restricts driving. You may drive your car only after when you are allowed to push with the ball of the foot. See the [rehabilitation guide](#) (pdf file in Finnish).

Dressing

The dressing around the big toe is important for your therapy after the surgery.

The function of the dressings is to keep the big toe straight. It prevents the toe from turning into the former incorrect position or to the opposite direction away from the other toes.

The dressing is used for 6 weeks. The padded dressing made in the procedure is kept until the sutures are removed. After that, the foot is dressed daily for 4 weeks according to the instructions below:



[Print a big picture of the instructions here](#) (pdf)

Wound care

You may shower after 24 hours. **Use a waterproof plastic bag to protect the foot, so that the dressings do not get wet.**

The sutures are removed after 2 weeks at your health centre, occupational health centre, or health clinic (neuvola) (date ____/____). You may shower the foot and go to sauna 24 hours after the removal of the sutures.

Treatment of pain

Regular pain relief medication, elevated position, and ice pack therapy efficiently reduce swelling and pain after the operation.

It is recommended that you take pain killers for 1–4 days and after that when necessary

Paracetamol

Anti-inflammatory

Strong painkiller

Other medication

Follow-up visit is with the physician after 5–6 weeks if needed.

Sick leave is 4–12 weeks depending on the operation and your occupation.

Contact us

If you experience inflammatory symptoms (increasing pain, heavy swelling, warmth, redness, or continuous wound discharge through the bandages) or other problems, contact your health centre or treating unit

Day Surgery Unit A2 on working days from 07.00–17.00 tel. **(06) 323 1552**

Emergency Department at other times tel. **(06) 323 1311**

Your own health centre or occupational health centre

We wish you happy healing!