

Resection of tarsal coalition

Information for patients, parents and guardians

Your child has been diagnosed with a tarsal coalition. This is when an abnormal piece of bone or cartilage (firm tissue) joins the tarsal bones (two of the bones in the back of the foot) together.

The condition affects the bones of the foot in children and young people and is present at birth (congenital). It can lead to limited movement, stiffness and pain in the foot.

An operation can be performed to remove the abnormal piece of bone or cartilage in the foot. This procedure is known as a resection of the tarsal coalition. Treatment can in some cases include special insoles in your child's shoes, and this may have already been tried. This factsheet aims to answer your questions about the operation, but if you have any further concerns your child's healthcare team will be happy to discuss them.

About the operation

Your child will need a general anaesthetic for the operation (medicine given to make them go to sleep). A surgical cut is made on the outside of the foot. The bridge of bone or cartilage is removed. After surgery the joint should move much more freely. Your child will have full movement back, or movement in the foot will be much improved.

What happens if I decide against my child having an operation?

Without the operation the abnormality will continue to cause restriction of movement between the two bones in the ankle. Eventually the continued wearing down of the joint will cause increased pain.

Aftercare

Your child will be in hospital for one or two nights after surgery. A plaster cast is usually put on the foot from the toes to just below the knee. Your child will be able to walk with the cast on. It will be left on for a total of two weeks and is then removed in the outpatient clinic. Movement of the foot and ankle is encouraged, along with normal walking. Physiotherapy may be needed to help with rehabilitation (getting back to normal). The time for recovery is approximately six to 12 weeks. It's a good idea to contact your child's school or college to discuss the support that they may need.

Possible complications

Your child's healthcare team will ensure their stay in hospital and the treatment they receive is as safe as possible. However, all medical procedures carry some risk and there is a possibility that complications might arise. You should ask the healthcare team if you would like any more information about complications, or if there is anything you do not understand. The anaesthetist will discuss any possible complications of your child having an anaesthetic with you. Pain-relieving medicine will be given as prescribed by the anaesthetist or the doctor.

- Bleeding can happen during or after surgery.
- There will be a scar as a result of the surgical cut.
- It's rare for the surgical wound to become infected.
- Antibiotics will be given if infection is present but in some cases further surgery may be needed.
- There may be altered feeling at the operation site and this may be temporary or permanent.
- It's important to keep your child's foot raised after surgery to reduce swelling that can cause more discomfort.

Sometimes a second operation may be needed to further improve your child's movement.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact:

The nurse practitioners office: **023 8120 4991** or mobile: **07584 402438**

Switchboard: **023 8077 7222 bleep 2641**

Ward G3: **023 8120 6486**

Plaster room: **023 8120 4852**

If you need a translation of this document, an interpreter or a version in large print, Braille or on audiotape, please telephone **023 8120 4688** for help.

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