

## INGROWN TOE NAILS

An ingrown nail is a condition in which a spike or serrated piece of nail punctures the fleshy tissue at the end of the toe. This condition usually occurs on either side of the nail of the large toe (Hallux).



**Symptoms:** Ingrown toenails produce acute throbbing pain along the length of the edge of the nail that has cut into the skin. The surrounding skin is often shiny, red and inflamed and may produce a clear to yellow discharge if an infection is present. This area is usually extremely tender and even slight pressure can produce excruciating pain.

**Treatment:** The podiatrist will assess your foot and identify the length and depth of the serrated edge of nail. A treatment plan to remove the nail spike will then be implemented. Self treatment of an ingrown nail can further damage the soft tissues of the toe leading to infection. Non treatment will lead to infection, prolonged pain and disability. Depending on the severity of the ingrown nail, surgical removal of a portion of the nail may be indicated.

**Nail Surgery:** Toenail surgery is a minor surgical procedure that our podiatrists perform regularly under local anaesthesia, in our consultation rooms. Nail surgery can become necessary when an ingrown toenail repeatedly gets infected, is continually painful, makes you are unable to wear shoes or the condition inhibits other activities.

A 'partial nail avulsion' (known as a PNA or nail root and matrix resection) is a procedure which aims to permanently correct ingrown toenails. The procedure is performed under local anaesthetic via injection into the toe, and takes approximately one hour. Once the procedure is completed a sterile surgical dressing will be applied by our podiatrist. Whilst you will be able to walk afterwards, we recommend that you have assistance getting home. Our podiatrist will have explained the post operation care of your toe/s including re-dressings at home for the following four to six weeks.

The primary objective of the surgery is to permanently remove the portion of the nail that is cutting into the surrounding soft tissue of the toe so that the offending section of nail does not regrow. The specific nature of the surgery will depend on the severity of the ingrown nail. All aspects of the surgery including operation time, amount of time to avoid weight bearing exercise and healing time, will be explained to you by your podiatrist. Regular visits to our podiatrist can help manage and prevent ingrown toenails, alleviate pain and help to keep you mobile.