

DR JASON CRANE

ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEON



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FOOT & ANKLE SURGERY

If all other non-surgical treatment options have been explored, Dr Crane may advise surgery. There are various foot and ankle surgeries that may treat a variety of conditions. While Dr Crane will discuss the finer details with you prior to surgery, this is a rough outline of what you can expect after surgery.

How long would I be in hospital?

You will need to spend a night or two in the hospital for observation. Most people are in the hospital for 2-3 days after a foot or ankle surgery. Once you are able to walk with crutches and your wound, seem to be healing well you may be discharged and go home.

What can I expect after surgery?

After surgery, you can expect your foot and ankle to swell significantly. You will need to keep your foot elevated in your hospital bed to allow the swelling to decrease. Once the swelling has decreased, Dr Crane will fit a "black slab" cast onto your leg, from your knee to your toes. This cast is half plaster with the front being only bandages. This will protect your foot and ankle and keep the foot in a stable position for healing. You can expect some pain after surgery, but Dr Crane will prescribe you medication to help with this. Before you are discharged from the hospital, you will have the physiotherapists show you how to walk with crutches. When you do this, you will not be able to put any weight on your operated foot.

Your cast will stay on for roughly 8-12 weeks to allow the bones, cartilage, ligaments and tendons in your foot or ankle to heal. For the first 2 weeks, you should avoid putting any weight on your foot and rest at home with your foot elevated as much as possible. After about 2 weeks you will see Dr Crane for a follow-up. He will check your incisions, and your foot will be placed in the plaster cast again. Depending on your healing, he will then allow you to slowly add weight to your foot, while you still use the crutches. After 6 weeks you can put all your weight through your foot.

You will come for another follow up with Dr Crane after 8-12 weeks. He will then remove the cast completely and may use an x-ray to check your recovery and fusion of bones. Depending on the recovery, you may be placed in a brace for another month or so to allow for stability while healing. From here, if Dr Crane gives the go ahead, you can begin physiotherapy to mobilising the foot and ankle and start regaining strength now that the plaster cast has been removed.

You should be able to return to work after 3-4 weeks if you can elevate your foot at work. For those with manual jobs that require them to be on their feet, they may need to take as much as 6 months off work before they can be physically active again. Once your plaster is off, and you can fully bear weight on the foot, you may drive. If you cannot make an emergency stop, you should not be driving.

Resuming physical activity and sport may require up to a year of recovery. It is best to start slowly with walking or cycling once you are out of the plaster cast, building up to more vigorous exercise as your recovery allows. There may also be certain types of activities that may be difficult after a specific foot or ankle surgery, but this will be discussed with you prior to surgery.

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