Dr. Yousef Nafal, DPM
FOOT & ANKLE SURGEON

Questions? Call
(734) 667-3714

AFTER A PROCEDURE

After toenail removal: part or whole nail

Every day until it heals: soak in warm water and Epsom salt, add ointment, and re-bandage. Some drainage and a little redness are normal.

Your procedure (Dr. Nafal will check)

Removed: ☐ Part of the nail ☐ The whole nail

Nail root: ☐ Treated: won't grow back ☐ Not treated: will grow back

Ointment: ☐ Triple antibiotic (store-bought) ☐ Prescription: _____

Medical terms: partial or total nail avulsion; treating the root is a matrixectomy.

The first day

- Leave the first bandage on and keep it dry until tomorrow (or as told).
- Raise your foot when you sit, to ease throbbing.
- Your toe will be numb for a few hours. Take pain medicine as directed before it wears off.

Shoes and activity

- Wear an open-toe shoe or a loose shoe with room for the bandage.
- You can usually go back to work or school the next day.
- Avoid running, sports, and pools or hot tubs until Dr. Nafal says it's OK.

Daily care: step by step

1
Wash your hands.
Then gently remove the old bandage. If it sticks, soak it off.

2
Soak 10 to 15 minutes
in warm water with Epsom salt (1 to 2 tablespoons per quart), 1 or 2 times a day.

3
Pat dry
with a clean towel or gauze. Don't rub.

4
Add ointment.
Put a thin layer of the ointment checked above on the nail area.

5
Cover it
with a clean bandage. Change it if it gets wet or dirty.

6
Repeat daily
until there is no more drainage and the skin is dry and closed.

What to expect

	Part of the nail removed	Whole nail removed
Skin heals in	Often 2 to 4 weeks	Often 4 to 8 weeks. The nail bed is soft and tender at first.
Normal drainage	Clear, yellow or light pink, often 1 to 2 weeks. Can last 3 to 6 weeks if the root was treated.	Often a few weeks, until the nail bed is dry. Can last longer if the root was treated.
Keep it covered until	The skin is closed and dry	The nail bed is dry and firm
Will the nail grow back?	If the root was treated, that edge usually won't grow back. If not, it grows back over several months.	If the root was treated, it usually won't grow back. If not, a new nail grows in over about 12 to 18 months. It may look thick or uneven at first.

Also normal: a little redness at the edge of the nail, and a soft, yellowish film in the wound while it heals.



Cut toenails straight across, not curved or too short.

Illustration: BruceBlaus, CC BY-SA 4.0

Caring for your nails

- Cut nails **straight across**, level with the tip of your toe.
- Don't dig into the corners or tear nails.
- Wear shoes and socks that leave your toes room.
- If a new nail grows in thick, curved or painful, let us check it.
- If you have diabetes or poor circulation, let us trim your nails.

Your follow-up visit

Date: _____ Time: _____ ☐ Canton ☐ Troy

⚠ Call us right away if you have

- Redness that spreads or red streaks up your foot
- Pain or swelling that gets worse after 2 to 3 days
- Thick pus or a bad smell
- Fever over 100.4°F or chills
- A toe that isn't getting better each week