

Post-Surgical Rehabilitation Protocol for Minimally Invasive Hallux Valgus (Bunion) Surgery



Scan to be directed to Dr. Yi's page with this rehabilitation protocol

Please use common sense and listen to your body. If something feels wrong or there is a significant increase in pain/discomfort at any point, contact Dr. Yi. The following is a general guideline. Dr. Yi may adjust the following based on your specific progress.

Time

Activity

For first 2 weeks after surgery

Weight bearing as tolerated in postoperative stiff-soled shoe (**PLEASE LIMIT TO ESSENTIALS OF DAY-TO-DAY LIFE**)

- Some patients will use crutches for a few days and in some cases even up to 1-2 weeks. **Please listen to your symptoms.**
- Remember to **elevate** your foot above the level of your heart to decrease swelling
- An **ice pack** over the dressing or even along the ankle can also help (do not fall asleep with the ice pack on your skin as this can cause damage)
- **Keep the dressing/bandage in place, clean, and dry.**

2 weeks after surgery

Weight bearing as tolerated in postoperative shoe

- You will meet with Dr. Yi to have the **dressing/bandage removed and to obtain x-ray's**
- You will **likely have your sutures removed** at this point
- Dr. Yi will place a **removable toe alignment splint** (this will remain in place at all times except for hygiene purposes for the first 6 weeks). This fits

underneath socks and inside your postop shoe

- Continue weight bearing as tolerated in postoperative shoe (but **limit to the essentials of day-to-day life**)

4-6 weeks after surgery

Weight bearing as tolerated in postoperative shoe

- For most patients, swelling has decreased to the point of being able to fit into a **regular, supportive athletic shoe**
- Continue using the **toe alignment splint at night**
- If you transition into a regular shoe, you will need a **carbon fiber insert (see below)**. Remove the insert in your shoe, place the carbon fiber insert, and then place the insert on top of the carbon fiber insert.

6 weeks after surgery

- **You will meet with Dr. Yi to obtain new x-ray's**
- **Bring your roomiest lace-up shoe/sneaker** (Dr. Yi will place your carbon fiber insert in your shoe)
- Ok to start **easing into low impact** activities (yoga, Pilates, stationary bicycle, elliptical, swimming, longer walks)
- Continue to use your **pain as your guide**
- Slow down if there is significant pain

12 weeks after surgery

- **You will meet with Dr. Yi to obtain new x-ray's**
- Ok to start **easing into high impact** activities (running, jumping)
- Continue to use your **pain as your guide**
- Slow down if there is significant pain

Items/Equipment for Recovery

Dr. Yi has partnered with the Recovery Shop (an independent online shop) and has curated the specific items that you will need for your recovery. Please purchase these items before your first postoperative visit.

Dr. Yi has partnered with the Recovery Shop because it offers high quality items at a fair price and delivers the products to your home in a timely fashion. Alternatively, you can find similar items on other online shops such as Amazon.

******Mandatory Items******

1. Carbon Fiber Foot Plates

- This item is necessary to help shield your foot as you transition into a regular shoe at the 4-6-week time point after surgery

- Go to: shop-recovery.net/yi → click on “Foot & Ankle Non-Surgical” → choose “Carbon Fiber Foot Plates” and choose the “rigid” option

2. Darco Tas Toe Alignment Splint

- This product is necessary to help hold your toe in the corrected position while it is healing

- Go to: shop-recovery.net/yi → click on “Foot & Ankle Non-Surgical” → choose “Darco Tas Toe Alignment Splint”

3. Gel Toe Spacers

- This item will help to hold your toe in the corrected position after your transition into a regular shoe (which will not fit the above toe alignment splint)

- Go to: shop-recovery.net/yi → click on “Foot & Ankle Non-Surgical” → choose “Gel Toe Spacers”

Optional/Recommended Items

1. NICE Cold/compression machine

- This item is a user-friendly cooling/compression device that can be applied over your foot and greatly aids in decreasing soft tissue swelling/pain and can accelerate your

recovery. Patients often report a significantly decreased need to take pain medications when using this machine.

- Dr. Yi recommends that you start using this machine at the 2 week time point after surgery so that it can be applied directly to the foot
- Dr. Yi recommends starting off with “Medium” setting for compression and “level 3” for cooling temperature. You can feel free to adjust as necessary (i.e. go to a higher level for cooling if it does not feel cool enough)
- The Recovery shop offers this item for rental for 2-, 3-, and 4- week options. Some patients want to rent it for longer and this can be arranged for.

2. The Recovery Shop also offers a wide selection of items that can aid you during your recovery. Some examples include: crutches, knee scooters (purchase or rental), walkers, elevation pillows, compression socks, shower chairs, cast/dressing bags, etc.

3. POSTOPERATIVE NUTRITION

Many patients are also interested in optimizing their nutrition after surgery. Proper nutrition is vital for a successful post-surgical recovery. The Recovery Shop offers 1-, 2-, and 3-week nutritional supplement packages to optimize your recovery.

These vegan-friendly recovery packages are backed by clinical and basic science research and were surgeon formulated.

These packages include pre-operative carbohydrate loading drink mixes and postoperative recovery supplements.

Click on the “Nutrition Optimization and Supplements” tab for more information.

Preventing Blood Clots

- Blood clots (formally known as “deep venous thrombosis”) can occur after injury, immobilization, and surgery. These blood clots can be dangerous especially if they travel to your lungs. Go to the emergency room or call the emergency line immediately if you have any symptoms such as calf swelling, calf pain, chest pain, shortness of breath.
- Fortunately, there are medications that effectively prevent blood clots
- You will take:

Controlling Pain After Surgery

- Unfortunately, you will have pain after surgery and there is no safe method to completely eliminate pain safely
- However, there are many strategies that can effectively decrease your pain level to a reasonable level:
 - Icing
 - Elevation of the leg (above the level of your chest)
 - Acetaminophen (“Tylenol”)
 - Oral anti-inflammatory medications (such as ibuprofen)
 - Narcotic pain medications (such as “oxycodone”)
- We will review and formulate a pain management plan specific to your situation (especially if you have allergies or adverse reactions to particular medications)
- Go to the emergency or call the emergency line immediately if you have pain that is significant and/or worsening despite taking medications