

# **DR ANDREW WINES MBBS FRACS (Orth) FAOrthA**

## **Adult and Paediatric Orthopaedic Surgeon**

### **Foot, Ankle and Trauma Surgery**

## **REMOVAL OF HARDWARE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Patients often need screws, plates, nails or wires removed after a period of time to improve function or reduce irritation or pain. Hardware removal involves exposing the hardware to be removed and reconstituting the surrounding tissues.

### **THE SURGERY**

Surgery to remove hardware includes:

- i. general anaesthetic, intravenous antibiotics.
- ii. incision over the affected area.
- iii. identification of hardware.
- iv. removal of hardware with appropriate equipment.
- v. Irrigation of wound if required.
- vi. wound closure with stiches/sutures.
- vii. infiltration with local anaesthetic.

### **THE RISKS OF SURGERY**

All surgical procedures carry some risk. The risk of complications with this surgery is low (in the vicinity of 20%). Some of the risks of surgery include:

- Infection
- Problems with wound healing that may require antibiotic treatment, readmission to hospital, further surgery including plastic surgery and/or other treatments
- Nerve injury causing pain, numbness tingling and/or pins and needles
- Ongoing pain
- Complex regional pain syndrome
- Scarring and stiffness
- Recurrence and over correction of the deformity
- Deep venous thrombosis/pulmonary embolism. (The risk of DVT increases with smoking, the oral contraceptive pill and hormone replacement therapy, immobility and obesity).
- Insufficient blood flow resulting in loss of toes, foot or limb
- Drug allergy / anaphylaxis
- Further surgery
- Anaesthetic complications including heart attack, stroke and death

### **GUIDELINES FOR EXPECTED POST OPERATIVE RECOVERY**

Keep dressings dry and intact until post operative appointment. Keep foot elevated as much as possible, especially for initial 72 hours.

Removal of stitches/sutures: 10-14 days.

Pain killers may be required: Up to 6 weeks.

- You may weight bear as tolerated following the surgery.
- For the first 2 weeks this may be in a post operative shoe to accommodate your bandage.
- Crutches may be required to assist mobilisation.

Commence gentle range of motion exercises on the day of surgery.

Return to most activities: 6 weeks.

Full recovery: Within 3 months.

Every patient's recovery is individual and depends on the severity of the pathology and the complexity of the surgery.

### **ANY PROBLEMS**

During office hours contact Dr Wines' office on (02) 9409 0563. After hours, please contact the hospital where your surgery was performed.