



Radiofrequency ablation of Morton's neuroma

Frequently asked questions

What does the procedure involve?

Local anaesthetic injection will be given in between the toes, which will make the toes numb. A thin needle will be introduced under ultrasound guidance between the toes, and the radiofrequency application will be switched on intermittently for about 5 minutes.

The whole procedure will take about half an hour. You will not be able to drive after the procedure, so you may need someone to accompany you. You will need to limit activities for the first 48 hours and take regular pain relief, as the nerve can become painful after the procedure.

What are the benefits of this procedure?

You will get significant and lasting pain and symptom relief from the Morton's neuroma.

How good are my chances of getting those benefits? Could having the procedure make me feel worse?

According to research, eight out of ten people receive significant pain relief for up to six to eight months. Long term efficacy of the procedure however remains unknown.

It is possible the pain can get worse over the first few days, but it should get better after. We will review you in eight weeks' time, and occasionally offer a repeat procedure should you have significant, but incomplete pain relief.

Are there alternative procedures?

Steroid and anaesthetic injection can be used, which provides temporary pain relief.

Surgical excision of the neuroma is an alternative treatment, which you can opt for.

What are the risks of the procedure?

Studies have shown that the risks of radiofrequency ablation for Morton's neuroma can include infection, nerve irritation, swelling, bruising, scarring, or the destruction of bone tissue; however these are rare.

Are the risks serious? How likely are they to happen?

The procedure is safe, with the risks listed above being both minor and rare. Some changes like nerve irritation causing pain, skin redness or blood collection tend to resolve themselves within one to two weeks.

What care will I need after the procedure?

You will need to restrict your activities for 48 hours, although you can do your activities of daily living.

You may need to take simple pain relief tablets for the first few days. Additional measures like cold compression may also help in the first few days.

What happens if something goes wrong?

You will be provided with a contact telephone number to ring if you are concerned, which you can call if for advice.

We will get in touch with you in eight weeks' time to review you.

What may happen if I don't have the procedure?

You can choose not to have the procedure should you wish. If that is what you decide, you can either wait to see how your symptoms evolve, have a steroid injection alone to reduce pain, or you can opt to have a surgical excision of the neuroma.

Please use the space below to write down any questions you may have and bring this with you to your next appointment.

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