



RUSH MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
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Surgical Patient Education

Amputation

What is an Amputation?

An amputation surgery is done to remove diseased and/or infected soft tissue and bone.

This surgery makes cuts to the area of the foot that needs to be removed and uses a special tool to complete the amputation.



What are the Risks?

- **Infection** - There is always a risk of infection when you make surgical cuts to the skin, but this procedure is often done to remove infection.
- **Bleeding** - There is a risk of bleeding as with all surgical incisions/procedures.
- **Other Risks** - Not removing all the infected tissue and complications with wound healing often happen with amputation due to the fact that it is done when there is already infection/diseased tissue.

What happens during the procedure?

- You will arrive to the surgery center and go to Pre-Op and be checked in if you are not already admitted on the floor.
- You will then be taken to the operating room and will be placed on monitors and watched closely. Then you will be put to sleep or given a local anesthetic to numb the area.
- After you are asleep or your foot is completely numb, the surgeon will make an incision(s) to your foot and perform the procedure.
- Your skin will be sutured closed. Gauze and a large bandage will be placed over the foot along with a walking boot or a post op shoe.
- You will be woken up if you were put to sleep. When you are stable you will go home or back to the floor, usually within 1-2 hours.

Before Surgery

- You may be asked to stop certain medications such as aspirin or ibuprofen, be sure to check with your surgeon's office and anesthesia to see what medications to stop.
- You will be asked not to eat or drink the night before surgery, it is important to follow these instructions.
- You will be asked to shower the night before or morning of surgery.
- You need to arrange help at home in preparation for surgery. You will often not be able to walk on your foot for a minimum of 2 weeks and possibly longer until the wound is healed.

After Surgery

- You will have a bulky dressing to your foot afterwards that will stay on until you follow up with your surgeon.
- If you shower, use a waterproof dressing or bandage to cover your dressing to your foot so it does not get wet.
- You may be given a prescription for medication for pain sometimes this can also be over the counter. It is important to take the medicine as prescribed, and you can take it around the clock for the first two days to get maximum pain control.
- Keep your foot elevated above your heart as much as possible. This will make you more comfortable, decrease pain, and decrease the risk of a blood clot.
- Physical therapy is usually not needed.

Recovery After an Amputation

How long will I be out of work?

- The question of how long you will be off work after an amputation can vary drastically depending on the reason for the amputation and how well the foot heals.
- Expect to be off work **2-3 weeks** minimum for wound healing. But once again, this number can vary greatly.
- The recovery may be shorter or longer, and sometimes you can go back to work quicker depending on your job and activities performed at your job.
- You will need to follow your physician-specific instructions for walking for a minimum of 2 weeks and maybe longer. Sometimes this can mean you cannot walk on your foot at all in many circumstances.
- You will have sutures in your foot that will hopefully come out after 2-3 weeks, depending on healing and severity of infection.
- You may need crutches or a device to help assist with walking afterward to help keep pressure off the sutures/repair.