

**If you discover any problems with your feet, contact your Podiatry Department or GP immediately. If they are not available, go to your nearest accident and emergency department. Remember, any delay in getting advice or treatment when you have a problem can lead to more serious problems.**

*Individual advice*

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**Equality Statement**

At South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust we are fully committed to equality and diversity, both as an employer and as a service provider. We have a policy statement in our Equality Strategy that clearly outlines our commitment to equality for service users, patients and staff:

You and your family have the right to be treated fairly and be routinely involved in decisions about your treatment and care. You can expect to be treated with dignity and respect. You will not be discriminated against on any grounds including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

You have a responsibility to treat other service users, patients and our staff with dignity and respect

Our information for patients can also be made available in other languages, Braille, audio tape, disc or in large print.

**PALS**

We offer a Patient Advice Liaison Service (PALS). This is a confidential service for families to help with any questions or concerns about local health services.

You can contact the service by the direct telephone line on 01926 600 054 by email: [Pals@swft.nhs.uk](mailto:Pals@swft.nhs.uk) or by calling in person to the PALS Office which is located in the Lakin Road Entrance of Warwick Hospital.

South Warwickshire **NHS**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Podiatry Department



## Podiatry Service Nail Surgery whilst pregnant or breastfeeding

Name:

NHS No:

**Podiatry Single Point of Access**  
**Telephone: 01926 600810**

Lines open 9am to 4pm Monday to Friday

Email: [podiatryreferrals@swft.nhs.uk](mailto:podiatryreferrals@swft.nhs.uk)

## What is Nail Surgery?

Nail surgery is the removal of part or all of the nail due to an ingrown toe nail or involution of the nail.

For this procedure to take place an anaesthetic needs to be administered. Podiatrists are only qualified to give, Local analgesia via an injection with Local anaesthetic.

To prevent the nail from growing back and the problem recurring a chemical Phenol is used on the nail bed. Podiatrists are only able to provide a permanent treatment option with this method.

## Local Anaesthetic in Pregnancy

There has been no research with regards to local anaesthesia in pregnant women. Although there is no clinical evidence that local anaesthetics cause birth defects when used for emergency surgery in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.

It is therefore recommended that the administration of Local anaesthetics during pregnancy should be avoided and conservative treatment provided instead. If the ingrown toe nail is so severe that surgery is indicated urgently, the podiatrist should avoid administering the LA during the first trimester, carrying out the procedure later in the pregnancy.

Alternatively, the podiatrist should refer the patient to their GP requesting an orthopaedic referral.

## Local Analgesia in Breast Feeding

Many drugs are excreted in breast milk, although it is not known if Local anaesthetic is present in human milk. The patient is advised to contact her Midwife/Health Visitor, so that alternative feeding arrangements can be made for 30 hours following the administration of the Local anaesthetic. However, unless the surgery is urgently required, the patient should be advised to wait until she is no longer breast feeding.

## Phenol in Pregnancy and Breast Feeding

There is no clinical evidence that phenol applied during nail surgery is / is not absorbed into the body beyond the tissues local to the application. It is suggested that, unless the surgery is urgent, the patient waits until the birth of her baby and/or is no longer breast feeding. If surgery is urgent phenol must not be used, therefore the patient must be referred to a podiatric or orthopaedic surgeon for a surgical procedure.

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Risk code: .....

## Treatment options

### Pregnancy of less than 12 weeks duration.

We will be unable to perform any type of surgical procedure; a consultation appointment could be given to provide temporary relief until later in the pregnancy.

### Pregnancy of over 12 weeks duration and breastfeeding

We would be able to administer a local anaesthetic and provide temporary relief for nails which we consider to be urgent. We would not be able to provide a treatment option involving phenol. If the preferred feeding method was to be breastfeeding it may be appropriate for the patient to consider a surgical technique with the orthopaedic department where they can offer a procedure without the need for phenol. Alternatively the patient will need to wait until the baby is born if not breastfeeding or until breastfeeding has ended.

The podiatrist can review the problematic nail and the patients requirements discussed at a consultation appointment.