

The syndesmosis bunionectomy

The 'syndesmosis bunionectomy' is a unique surgical procedure for the correction of bunion deformities. It was pioneered by Daniel Wu, MD from Hong Kong, and does not require cutting or breaking the metatarsal bone as almost all other bunionectomy procedures do. The metatarsal deformity is manually realigned and held in place with **ultra-high strength suture** while the formation of a 'new' ligament between the metatarsals is facilitated with special 'fishscaling' techniques of the adjacent metatarsals and application of **platelet rich fibrin**. This is a concentrated plasma core that is taken from your own blood and contains growth factors for ligament formation. While **walking is permitted from day one**, it is necessary to avoid **too much** walking. There are a maximum # of steps per day that are allowed and a reduced rate of walking which are crucial for healing. It is 4-6 months before running or brisk walking for fitness can be done.

This bunionectomy technique not only corrects the deformity with less surgical trauma, but returns the foot back to its '**anatomically normal**' form in ways no other procedure involving bone cuts or fusions can.

Significantly less dissection is required and foot swelling is much less than with traditional surgery. Pain after surgery is therefore significantly less than with other bone procedures.

While the syndesmosis bunionectomy procedure allows both feet to be done at one time and allows for immediate walking, certain restrictions will be placed on the patient's walking for 6 months. If these restrictions are ignored, then complications like stress fractures of the metatarsals or recurrence of the bunion will occur.

This procedure requires strict adherence to postop protocols.

- You will be required to have a **Fitbit™** or activity tracker to help you limit your walking after surgery.
- A **forefoot cast** will be utilized at two weeks after surgery for a total of 3 months.
- A postop shoe or short cam-walker boot will be required for 3 months.
- Monthly visits and x-rays will be required for the first 6 months.
- Maximum steps allowed are as follows:
 - Minimal walking the first month
 - 3,000 steps per day at a slow pace for the 2nd month
 - 3,000-5,000 steps per day at an average pace for the 3rd month.
 - After three months you can increase your steps per day by 1000 each week.

After four months you can walk unlimited steps in good athletic shoes.

Doug Ichikawa, D.P.M.

Dr. Wu's website:

<http://www.bunioncenter.com/about-us/dr-wu>

