

Advances in Bunion Surgery Put Patients Back on Their Feet Faster



Robert S. Juris, D.P.M., performing surgery. He recently performed his 2,000th bunionectomy at Mercy.

Marie Quarry spent years suffering from bunion pain in both feet. Convinced that bunionectomies would involve a long recovery and significant pain during recuperation, she resisted having the bony overgrowths that caused her discomfort surgically removed. Instead, she changed her shoes, changed her habits, and gradually began giving up activities she enjoyed, such as hiking.

However, when Quarry met with Dr. Robert Juris, a board-certified foot surgeon at Portland Foot and Ankle, she decided to go ahead and put her best foot forward—or in this case, her worst foot—for surgery. “He assured me he would have me walking within 4 to 5 days,” Quarry says, “and he did. I took very little pain medication. It was amazing.”

New Treatment Techniques

Dr. Juris, who recently achieved a milestone when he performed his 2,000th bunionectomy at Mercy, explains that a bunion refers to an enlargement of the big toe joint and is often formed due to faulty foot mechanics, causing the toe to angle inward. Poorly fitting footwear can accelerate the development of a bunion, but heredity usually plays the major role. Pain can be mild, moderate, or, as it was in Quarry’s case, severe.

Quarry’s hesitance to seek surgical treatment mirrors that of many patients Dr. Juris sees. He says this is because bunionectomies used to involve the insertion of wires into the bone followed by months of cast immobilization. These procedures were often very painful with long periods of recuperation.

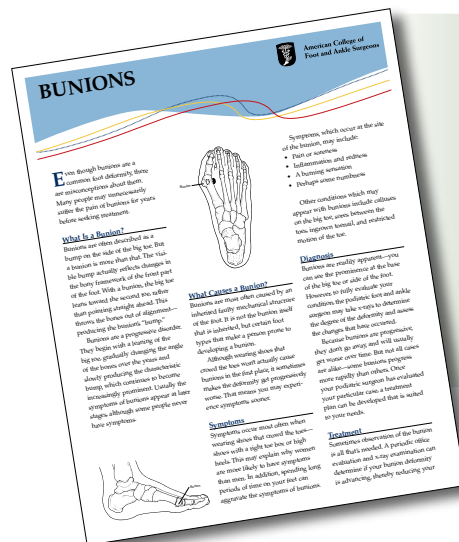
Newer surgical techniques and an experienced surgeon can change the scenario significantly. “With the right surgical team in place and

caring recovery room nurses—like the kind we have here at Mercy—patients have successful outcomes and are on their feet within a week,” he says.

Less Pain, Shorter Recoveries

At Mercy, Dr. Juris performs these procedures under local anesthesia with sedation, so patients go home the same day. Post-operatively there is usually very minimal pain. Dr. Juris says his patients are usually walking with a removable surgical boot after about five days and are into sneakers in two to three weeks, though it is six to eight weeks before they can begin to exercise.

Quarry, who credits Dr. Juris’ skill with her successful bunionectomy experiences, celebrated her pain-free status by taking a nine-mile hike with her family. “My only regret is having waited so long,” she says. “You really don’t realize how much you are on your feet until they hurt. Dr. Juris gave me my life back.” ■



Are bunions affecting your day to day activities? Learn more about what they are and how they can be treated. Call Portland Foot and Ankle at (207) 879-1339 for a FREE flyer or for more information.