

Extra little fingers and toes (extra digits) are extremely common in new-born babies and are typically removed under local anaesthetic within the first few months of life. This means that the children are awake for their surgery but will not feel pain during the procedure.

You will have been contacted and asked to send photos of your baby's hand/s or feet and these will have been reviewed by the specialist paediatric hand surgeon, who will decide if the extra digits can be removed under local anaesthetic

You will be given a time to attend the paediatric assessment unit where you will see the surgeon and have the digit/s removed during the same appointment.

What should I expect to happen?

On arrival, one of the nursing staff will record your baby's weight and length. This can be recorded in your red book if requested. They will also record some baseline observations of heart rate, temperature and blood pressure to ensure your baby is well for the procedure to go ahead.

You will meet one of the surgical team, who ask you some questions about your baby's health and development and they will also explain the procedure and what they are going to do and get your permission to carry out the operation by asking you to sign a consent form.

One parent will be able to be present in the minor operation room, no other children will be able to go in.

About the procedure

Surgery will be performed with you seated on a treatment couch with your baby sitting on your lap. You will be asked to start feeding your baby and once feeding is established a small dose of local anaesthetic will be given by injection with a very fine needle into the base of the extra fingers that are to be removed. These injections are always a little uncomfortable and it is normal for the baby to cry a little during this part of the procedure but the local anaesthetic works very quickly and the baby soon settles and concentrates on feeding.

After the procedure

The local anaesthetic lasts about two hours. Once it has worn off, there is usually very little discomfort.

If you think your child is in pain you may be able to give them some paracetamol syrup. Follow the instructions for their age group on the back of the bottle.

The surgery will only take a few minutes to complete, following which a very light dressing will be applied.

It will then take us a few minutes to complete our paperwork. Once all this is completed you will be free to leave. We will give you wound care advice, verbal and written.

We do not routinely arrange follow-up appointments after this type of surgery but you are welcome to call Peanut ward for advice.

Peanut ward

Tel: 01342 414468

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Removal of extra digits under local anaesthetic

Peanut Ward

Please ask if you
would like this leaflet
in larger print or a
different format.

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