



ANKLE ARTHROSCOPY

Advice and Exercise Leaflet



**Nuffield
Health**

What is an Ankle Arthroscopy?

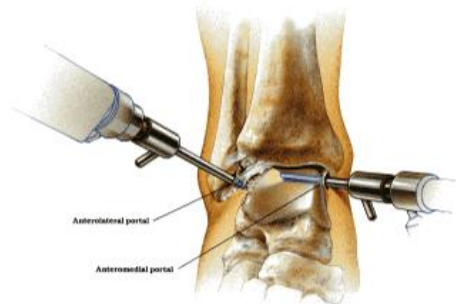
Arthroscopic surgery refers to any surgical procedure completed through small 'keyhole' cuts to the skin. They usually measure less than 1cm and allow your consultant to use a small camera lens to complete your operation. This is normally done under a general anaesthetic but can be completed by a regional anaesthetic that just numbs the leg.

An ankle arthroscopy may be performed as a diagnostic procedure to establish the cause of symptoms or as part of another procedure.

Why would I need an Arthroscopy?

If a clear reason for your symptoms can not be found, your consultant may feel there is cause to just look inside the joint . This is known as a diagnostic arthroscopy and you may agree prior to the procedure that they correct anything found.

It is more common for a cause of symptoms to be known prior to surgery, and for you and the consultant to have a clear idea of the procedure to be completed. This might include the removal of scar tissue or loose fragments, washing out fluid or reattaching small defects or grafts to the joint surface.



What happens?

Most arthroscopies are done as a Day Surgery .

Gentle traction is applied to the ankle and fluid is injected in to the joint to help expand the space available. Usually small cuts around 1/2 cm long are made at the front of the ankle on each side. A small telescopic camera and

In most cases you will go home the same day but this will only happen once the physiotherapists or nurses are happy that you are safe on your feet.

You may be asked to use crutches for a period of time depending on the procedure completed.

After Surgery

Pain management

During the surgery a local anaesthetic is injected in to the joint to reduce discomfort following the procedure. This will start to wear off later in the day and you may need to take pain relief for a few days. Keeping your pain levels low will enable you to rehabilitate faster and return to a normal pattern of walking. If your pain levels are low, you are less likely to limp and using your leg as normally as possible will prevent excessive muscle wasting and leg clots.

Walking

Weight bearing restrictions will be guided by your surgeon. With any major procedure you may be asked to non-weight bear.

Generally most patients are safe to walk as normal but crutches are provided to avoid excessive pain and swelling. For this reason we advise using your crutches for at least 2-3 days following your operation. If your surgeon would like you to stay on your crutches for longer, we will advise you of this following your surgery.

Swelling Management

Complications

Like all operations there are possible complications, fortunately these are uncommon and usually minor after an ankle arthroscopy. The risk varies depending on your general health.

Possible complications include:

- Infection of the wound or joint
- Nerve or blood vessel injury
- Excessive bleeding in to the joint which causes extreme pain
- Sensitivity or numbness of the scar
- Deep vein thrombosis; the formation of a clot within the lower leg

IF YOU DEVELOP A PAINFUL, RED AND HOT AREA ON YOUR CALF PLEASE CONTACT US ON 02380258414

DVT Prevention

'How can I limit my risk of developing a blood clot?'

- Drink plenty of water or other non-alcoholic drinks to keep hydrated.
- Move around little and often as much as you can.
- Wear the anti-embolism compression stockings if provided.
- Take any anticoagulant medication prescribed.

Returning to work

Usually you can return to office work within 2 weeks . If your job involves physical, manual or strenuous activities then you may need to take additional time off, to allow your soft tissue suitable time to recover.

Driving

You must NOT drive within 24 hours of a general anaesthetic.

Driving short distances is usually possible within a week dependant on comfort.

You should be able to depress the peddles without pain and preform a safe emer-

Exercises

You may find the bandage restricts your movement but we advise that you start these exercises as soon as possible. Only complete the exercises as pain allows and stop any that aggravate your symptoms. Try to complete these 3x daily.

Ankle pumps

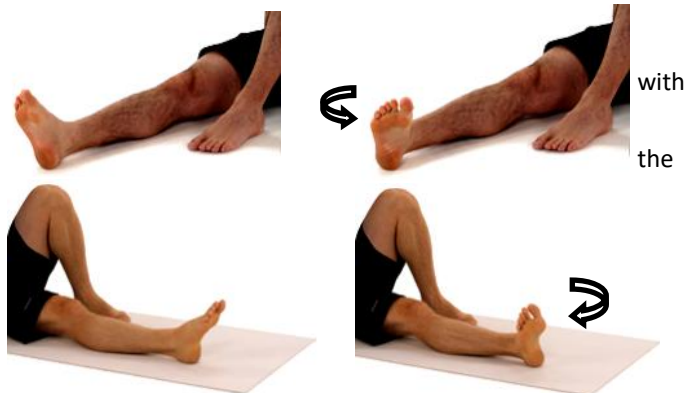
With your leg outstretched, pull your toes and foot up towards then point your foot down as far away from you as you can, keeping your knee straight throughout the movement.



Repeat 10 times

Ankle Rotations

Sitting or lying your leg outstretched. Turn soles of your foot inwards towards the other foot, and then turn them away from each other.



Repeat 10 times

If you have any questions or problems, please contact the
Physiotherapy Department on:

023 80 258406

The outpatient nurses can assist with any bleeding or
wound queries on: **02380 258414**

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