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Ankle Arthroscopy – A Patient Guide

What Operation has been Performed?

A key hole operation using 2 small cuts has been performed (arthroscopy). This allows a small telescope and instruments to be placed inside the ankle. A number of procedures can be performed using this technique, depending on what is required in your ankle. Scar tissue can be removed (debridement), bone spurs excised (cheilectomy), loose pieces of cartilage taken out (loose bodies) or cartilage stimulating procedures performed (microfracture).

Going Home After Surgery

You can walk after the operation as soon as you are comfortable, which is normally within a few hours. Once you have been assessed by a physiotherapist or nurse and are deemed safe (with or without crutches), you can go home the same day. Someone will need to pick you up.

Weight Bearing Status and Elevation

*Your weight bearing status is **(circle)**:

Full weight bearing (100%) / Partial weight bearing (50%) / Touch weight bearing (10%) / Non weight bearing (0%)

*Elevate the foot at the level of the chest, for 23 hours a day for **3 / 7 days (circle)** (for pain relief, swelling and wound healing). Sleep with foot on 2 pillows.

Day of the Operation at Home

You may experience some discomfort and should take pain killers, such as Codeine with Diclofenac. These should be taken regularly (3-4 times/day) especially before physiotherapy or exercise sessions. There may be some swelling in the ankle and if so, place ice (or frozen vegetables) on the ankle for 10 minutes in every hour, especially before and after physiotherapy or exercise sessions.

Day after the Operation, Bandage, Dressings and Showering

48 hours after the operation, you can remove the bandage, wool and gauze around the ankle yourself. Underneath will be 2 waterproof dressings. There may be some blood staining on the dressings, this is normal. Keep the dressings dry for 3 whole days after the operation. On the 4th day you can have a shower, taking care not to soak the dressings although they can get wet. Avoid a bath until Mr Gordon has seen you in clinic at 10 days to 2 weeks to review your wounds. Once you have removed the bandage, you can wear a normally shoe.

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Physiotherapy and Exercise

Adhere to your weight bearing status detailed above. You are encouraged to perform the Rehabilitation Exercises detailed below, as much as you feel comfortable. Exercise should start as soon as you are comfortable, on the day of surgery. More formal exercises or dedicated physiotherapy may commence 2 weeks after the operation if required.

Driving

You need to be able to control the vehicle in an emergency. Can you stamp your foot down on the ground? For left sided surgery and no clutch is required, driving is probably safe after a few days post operatively. For right sided surgery, driving is probably safe at 2 weeks post operatively, unless you are non weight bearing. You should check with your insurance company. If you are unsure, please ask Mr Gordon.

Returning to Work

This will depend on exactly what has been performed and how you are following surgery

Sedentary jobs: Return after 3 days

Standing/walking jobs: Return after 2 weeks, but may be sooner depending on comfort and swelling

Manual/labouring jobs: Return after 2-4 weeks, but may be sooner depending on comfort and swelling

Out Patient Visits to see Mr Gordon

2 weeks – to assess wound healing

6 weeks – to assess pain, swelling, muscle bulk and range of motion

12 weeks – to assess pain, swelling, muscle bulk and range of motion and to advise on increasing activity level

4-6 months – final review depending on progress

Rehabilitation Exercises – to be done every 2 hours

1. Active Circumduction

Rotate the foot so the toes 'draw' a circle in the air, clockwise and anti-clockwise

20 circles over 60 seconds



2. Active Ankle Dorsiflexion (foot up) and Plantarflexion (foot down)

Move foot up and down (1 repetition)

Repeat 20 times over 60 seconds



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3. Triple Flexion/Extension (hip, knee, ankle)

Bring knee toward chest bringing foot and ankle up
Straighten leg, pointing toes
Repeat 30 times



The following should NOT be done if Non Weight Bearing

4. Static Strengthening of :

4a: Invertor muscles (**DO NOT DO IF NON WEIGHT BEARING**)

Push both feet together and hold for 10 seconds
Repeat 5 times



4b: Evertor muscles (**DO NOT DO IF NON WEIGHT BEARING**)

Cross legs over
Push both feet together and hold for 10 seconds
Repeat 5 times
Swap over feet



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4c: Dorsiflexion and Plantarflexion muscles (**DO NOT DO IF NON WEIGHT BEARING**)

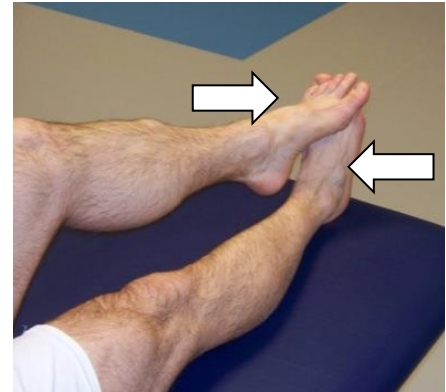
Place one foot over the other

Push up with lower foot, resisted by upper foot

Hold for 10 seconds

Repeat 5 times

Swap over feet and repeat



5. Triceps Surae Stretch (**DO NOT DO IF NON WEIGHT BEARING**)

Place feet apart and put hands on a wall

Have injured leg toward the rear

Keep feet in place on ground

Lean forward, keeping the heel of the rear (injured) foot on the ground

Hold for 20 seconds

Repeat 3 times

Swap feet

