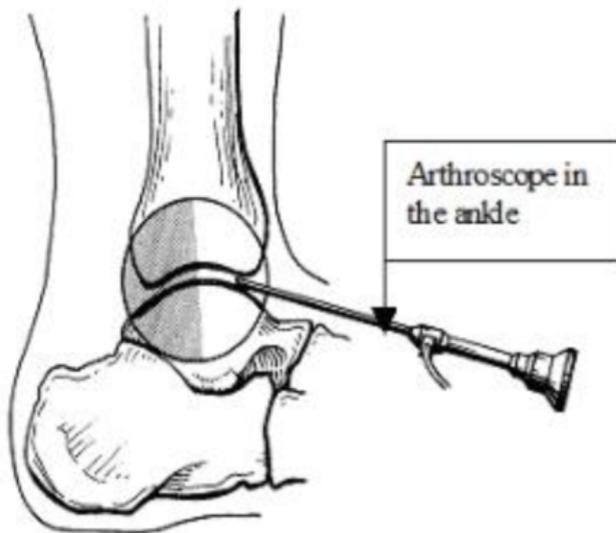


# Ankle Arthroscopy

## Orthopaedic Department Patient Information Leaflet



## **What is an Ankle Arthroscopy?**

This is keyhole surgery of the ankle usually performed under general anaesthetic, as a day case. A small camera (about 3 mms in diameter) is inserted into the ankle joint through two or three small incisions. This allows the surgeon to see and operate inside the joint.

## **Who is this operation for?**

The operation may be performed to:

- Help diagnose the cause of pain in the ankle joint.
- Help in the management of Osteoarthritis of the ankle joint.
- Remove damaged cartilage.
- Remove inflamed soft tissue.

## **Are there any complications of this operation?**

- Stiffness of your foot or ankle.
- Infection. All invasive procedures carry a small risk of infection.
- Bleeding.
- Swelling.
- A joint that continues to be painful.
- Injury to nerves – Numbness or tingling can occur at the wound or in the foot. This is usually temporary but in some it may be permanent. This happens in less than 1% of patients.
- Blood clots - Deep vein thrombosis (DVT) or pulmonary embolism (PE) are rare. If you or your family have a history please let us know.
- Need for further surgery.

## **What do I need to do before the operation?**

It is a good idea to get things organised for your discharge from hospital.

Below is a list of things it might be a good idea to organise:

- Help with household tasks
- Food cupboards stocked up
- Help with shopping
- Help with children, pets and relatives organised for your return home
- Transport to and from hospital

## **What can I expect after the operation?**

When you arrive back on the ward from theatre your leg will be in a bandage. Your leg will be elevated to reduce swelling. Your foot may be numb due to the local anaesthetic block. This will gradually wear off over 24 hours.

You can expect to stay in hospital for 2-5 hours following surgery. Very occasionally you may need to stay overnight.

You will need to arrange for someone to pick you up to take you home.

Before going home a member of the Physiotherapy team will see you and teach you some exercises to maximise your recovery. They will check you are able to walk safely with crutches and use the stairs as needed.

It may be uncomfortable but you are allowed to fully weight-bear through your leg and should try to walk as normally as possible.

You may use the crutches for a few days as needed.

Occasionally patients after ankle arthroscopy are non-weight bearing.

Your Consultant Surgeon makes the decision about this during your operation once he/she has looked inside your ankle.

The staff on ward will tell you if you require being non-weight bearing. Again this is not common.

You will also be given exercises to do. It is important to start moving your ankle as soon as possible to avoid stiffness and get back to normal quickly.

### **What about pain?**

Whilst you are in hospital you will be monitored and the medical staff give you painkillers as needed.

The Nursing staff ensures that you know what medications to take for pain when you get home.

Keeping your leg elevated helps to control the pain and minimise the risk of your incision becoming infected.

**You will need to keep your leg elevated 50 minutes out of every hour for the first 2 weeks.**

This prevents your incision from leaking and becoming infected.

### **What happens after discharge?**

You can remove the bandage 48 hours after surgery.

The incision sites will be stitched or steri-stripped closed and should be kept dry for two weeks.

You may shower with a waterproof dressing 48 hours after surgery.

Stitches will be removed about 10 days later.

It will take at least 3 weeks to recover to your preoperative state if soft tissue procedure has been performed and twice as long if a bone has been removed.

### **When can I return to work?**

Your own circumstances will determine when you feel ready to go back to work.

If you have an office-type job and you can elevate your leg then you should be able to return to work within 7 days.

If your job requires a lot of walking or is strenuous then you may need 2-3 weeks off work.

Patients can self-certificate their sick leave for 7 days.

If you require a sick certificate please ask your GP.

## **When can I drive?**

You must be free of pain and able to perform an emergency stop.

This will also depend on which foot was operated on (right or left).

If you have had left sided surgery and drive an automatic car you may be able to drive 2-4 weeks following surgery.

Your insurance company must be notified regarding the type of operation that you have undergone to ensure that cover is valid.

## **When can I return to sport?**

Normally approximately 4-6 weeks following surgery your ankle will no longer be swollen, and you will be feeling strong enough to return to strenuous activity or sport.

You need to grade your return to competitive sport such as football or rugby.

You must be able to hop / sprint or change direction and make sudden stops or starts without pain.

Check with your Consultant at follow up appointment before returning to sport.

## Exercises:

These will reduce the stiffness in your ankle. The repetitions outlined are a guide. Be guided by your pain and progress as able.



### 1. Ankle circling

Imagine your drawing a circle with your heel, as large as possible. Repeat 10 times per hour in each direction.



### 2. Ankle pumps

Bend and straighten your ankle as far as possible. Repeat 10 times per hour.



### 3. Ankle scoops

Move foot from side to side by using a 'scooping' action. Repeat 10 times per hour.



### 4. Toe scrunches

Spread toes out wide, then grip the towel and pull toward you. Repeat 10 times per hour.

# Useful contact details

## Appointments Office:

Telephone: 01253 953540

Hospital Switchboard: **01253 300000**

## Patient Relations Department

The Patient Relations Department offer impartial advice and deal with any concerns or complaints the Trust receives. You can contact them via:

Tel: **01253 955589** or by Email: **patient.relations@bfwh.nhs.uk**

You can also write to us at: **Patient Relations Department, Blackpool Victoria Hospital, Whinney Heys Road, Blackpool FY3 8NR**

Further information is available on our website: **www.bfwh.nhs.uk**

## References

This leaflet is evidence based wherever the appropriate evidence is available, and represents an accumulation of expert opinion and professional interpretation.

Details of the references used in writing this leaflet are available on request from: **Procedural Document and Leaflet Coordinator 01253 953397**

## Options available

If you'd like a large print, audio, Braille or a translated version of this booklet then please call: **01253 955588**



Our Four Values:

|                |            |
|----------------|------------|
| People Centred | Positive   |
| Compassion     | Excellence |



Author: Ramankutty Sreekumar

Approved by: Clinical Improvement Committee

Reference No: lc00012501 PL/458 (v2)

Date of Publication: 15/08/2016

Review Date: 01/08/2019