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ORTHOSPORTS™

Ankle Arthroscopy

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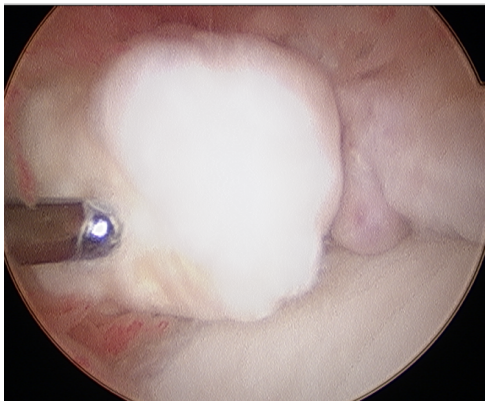
You have been recommended an ankle arthroscopy to treat your condition. An ankle arthroscopy is "keyhole" surgery, where tiny incisions are made around the ankle joint to perform surgery. Specialised instruments and a camera are used to thoroughly examine your ankle joint and to treat any abnormalities.

The benefits of an arthroscopic procedure are that it is minimally invasive, resulting in less pain, lower risks of infection, and less scar tissue than with an open procedure. Most repairs can be performed through these small incisions. The following conditions can be treated by arthroscopy:

- Anterolateral impingement syndrome
- Osteochondral lesions of the talar dome
- Loose bodies
- Chondrocalcinosis
- Arthritis



A loose body is being removed from the ankle joint with specialised arthroscopic instruments.

Anterolateral Impingement Syndrome

An ankle sprain causes tearing of ligaments and capsule that surrounds the ankle joint. Initially the injury causes swelling and bleeding. Eventually the ligaments heal and the swelling subsides. Occasionally, excess scar tissue forms, causing persistent pain even after the ligaments heal. Usually physiotherapy can help to break adhesions and loosen the scar tissue. However, if nonoperative

treatment fails, surgery is considered to clean out the excess scar tissue with arthroscopic instruments.

Osteochondral Lesions of the Talar Dome

The ankle joint consists of two surfaces, the tibial plafond above and the talar dome below. These surfaces are made of strong cartilage that is extremely smooth to allow movement of the joint. These surfaces can be damaged after an injury that bruises the cartilage and underlying bone. Softening of the cartilage may develop, resulting in pain and inflammation within the ankle joint. Treatment with physiotherapy, anti-inflammatories, and cortisone injections may reduce the inflammation and pain until the lesion heals. Some lesions fail to heal or progress to tears of the cartilage. In these cases, non-operative treatment usually fails to help and surgery is recommended. During arthroscopy, the torn cartilage is removed and the bone beneath is perforated to allow new cartilage to form. The surgery is successful 80% of the time.

Arthritis

Arthritis is a gradual process where there is destruction of the joint surfaces over a long time period. The strong, smooth surfaces of the healthy ankle joint slowly deteriorate to rough, frail surfaces of cartilage. Excess bone may grow in the front of the ankle joint, limiting motion and causing pain. Pain management techniques may help to reduce pain. While arthritis cannot be cured, pain can be lessened by an arthroscopy, especially when loose bodies are present in the joint, causing locking or intermittent pain. Arthritis is ultimately treated by an ankle fusion or ankle replacement.

Post-operative Care

Arthroscopy is usually a same day procedure, meaning you may arrive and leave on the same day. The surgery takes about one hour to complete. A sterile dressing will be placed on your ankle, allowing motion. I will review you after the surgery prior to you discharge to let you know the findings at surgery. You will be discharged with crutches to keep the foot off of the ground for five days to allow the wounds to heal. Walking is then allowed without crutches, if possible. After your first review in one to two weeks, physiotherapy may be started to rehabilitate the ankle.

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