

ANKLE

Ankle arthroscopy

Keyhole assessment and treatment for selected ankle problems, with recovery tailored to what is treated.

Patient information, treatment choices, risks, recovery and a space to record your individual plan.

Understanding the condition

Ankle arthroscopy uses a small camera to inspect the joint. It may treat loose fragments, impingement, inflamed tissue or selected cartilage problems. Your symptoms, examination and imaging help determine whether an arthroscopy is likely to help.

Treatment options

Alternatives vary with the diagnosis and may include physiotherapy, activity or footwear changes, medication, injections or a different operation. Arthroscopy is less likely to help pain from extensive established arthritis. It cannot guarantee that all pain will resolve.

What a procedure may involve

Small skin openings allow a camera and instruments into the ankle. The surgeon may remove problematic tissue or bone, or perform a cartilage procedure. Recovery after cartilage treatment or associated ligament surgery differs from recovery after a simple clean-up.

Risks and benefits to discuss

Possible benefits include improved comfort and function. Risks include infection, scar sensitivity, damage or irritation to skin nerves, persistent swelling or pain, stiffness, blood clots and the need for further treatment. Discuss any planned additional procedure and its specific risks.

Any operation also carries bleeding and anaesthetic risks. Occasionally, complex regional pain syndrome causes prolonged pain and sensitivity. Your health and the extent of surgery change your personal risk.

RECOVERY AND YOUR CONSULTATION

Ankle arthroscopy

Use this guidance to prepare your individual plan with the treating team.

Rehabilitation and aftercare

Keep wound dressings dry and elevate the leg. Use the weight-bearing and ankle-movement instructions supplied by the team. Gentle mobility and later strength or balance work may be advised, but do not begin exercises that conflict with a cartilage repair or other protected procedure.

Expected outcomes and recovery

The pace of recovery depends on the underlying condition and procedure. Swelling and activity tolerance may improve over weeks to months. Return to work, sport and driving is based on comfort, wound healing and safe function.

When to seek urgent help

Seek prompt advice for rapidly increasing pain, spreading redness, wound discharge, fever, new numbness or a cast or boot causing pressure. New calf pain or swelling needs urgent assessment. Chest pain or breathlessness needs emergency help: call 999.

Your consent discussion

Ask which treatment best addresses your symptoms, what alternatives are reasonable, what the main risks mean for you, and what recovery will involve at home and work. This guide supports that discussion; consent is completed with your treating team. Your individual written instructions take priority.

Sources and further reading

RNOH: Ankle arthroscopy

<https://www.rnoh.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/patient-information-guides/ankle-arthroscopy>

CLINICIAN-COMPLETED WORKSHEET

Your consent discussion

Ankle arthroscopy

This blank worksheet is not an executed consent. Complete it after clinical assessment with the treating clinician. The hospital or clinic must also complete its required consent process before treatment.

Patient name / identifier, date of assessment and communication support needed

Diagnosis, affected side / site and the proposed procedure or treatment

Reasonable alternatives discussed, including the option of no treatment

Expected benefit for this patient, limits of treatment and uncertainties

Material risks and personal risk factors - record the risks that matter to this patient

Patient's priorities, questions, understanding and agreed decision / time to consider

Treating clinician name, role and signature / date

Patient / representative name, signature and date - acknowledgement of discussion only

A signature here records a discussion; it does not replace a completed treatment consent form. You may ask further questions or change your decision before treatment.

CLINICIAN-COMPLETED WORKSHEET

Your rehabilitation and aftercare plan

Ankle arthroscopy

Complete this plan after assessment. The advice must match your injury or operation, imaging, wound and medical history. Do not start limb loading, remove protection or change medicines using an uncompleted worksheet.

Limb loading / weight bearing, walking aids, sling / cast / boot / brace and protection

Wound / dressing care, bathing, elevation and swelling advice

Medicines, pain relief, clot prevention and any treatment-specific restrictions

Exercises, physiotherapy, range of movement and progression criteria

Work, driving, sport and daily activities - individual restrictions / review points

Review date, imaging / tests, named clinician and routine / out-of-hours contact details

Clinician completing this plan, signature / date and patient questions

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