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Foot, Ankle and Trauma Surgery

ANKLE ARTHROSCOPY

INTRODUCTION

Arthroscopy (or key hole surgery) is a procedure to view the inside of a joint. Arthroscopy is a very useful way to treat cartilage damage, scar tissue, spurs and impingement of the ankle.

THE SURGERY

There are a number of steps involved in ankle arthroscopic surgery. These include:

- i. general anaesthetic, antibiotics
- ii. two small incisions (each 1 cm long) over the front of the ankle.
- iii. insertion of arthroscope
- iv. insertion of arthroscopic equipment including scissors, scrapers, shaver and burr
- v. infiltration with local anaesthetic
- vi. wound closure with stiches/sutures

THE RISKS OF SURGERY

All surgical procedures carry some risk. The risk of complications with ankle arthroscopic surgery is low (in the vicinity of 20%). Some of the risks of surgery include:

- Infection
- Problems with wound healing that may require antibiotic treatment, readmission to hospital, further surgery including plastic surgery and/or other treatments
- Nerve injury causing pain, numbness tingling and/or pins and needles.
- Anaesthetic complications including heart attack, stroke and death
- Ongoing pain
- Complex regional pain syndrome
- Scarring
- Deep venous thrombosis/pulmonary embolism. (The risk of DVT increases with smoking, the oral contraceptive pill and hormone replacement therapy, immobility and obesity).
- Insufficient blood flow resulting in loss of toes, foot or limb
- Anaesthetic complications
- Drug allergy
- Further surgery

GUIDELINES FOR EXPECTED POST OPERATIVE RECOVERY

Keep dressings dry and intact until post operative appointment. Keep foot elevated as much as possible, especially for initial 72 hours.

Removal of stiches/sutures: 10-14 days at first post operative appointment.

Pain killers may be required for up to 6 weeks.

You may weight bear as comfortable, crutches may be required.

Return to non-weight bearing activities e.g. swimming: 2 weeks

Commence physiotherapy: 2 weeks post-surgery

Return to light jogging: 6-9 weeks post-surgery

Return to most activities: 6-12 weeks post-surgery

Full recovery: Up to 3 months.

Every patient's recovery is individual and depends on the severity of the injury and the complexity of the surgery.

ANY PROBLEMS

During office hours contact Dr Wines' office on (02) 9409 0563. After hours please contact the hospital where your surgery was performed.