

DR ANDREW WINES MBBS FRACS (Orth)
Adult and Paediatric Orthopaedic Surgeon
Foot, Ankle and Trauma Surgery

OPEN REDUCTION AND INTERNAL FIXATION ANKLE

INTRODUCTION

Due to the nature your ankle fracture, you require open reduction and internal fixation. This involves restoring the normal anatomy of the bones of the ankle and holding them in place with plates and screws. Fortunately most patients have an excellent result following ankle fracture surgery and are able to return to most pre-injury activities.

THE SURGERY

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

- i. general anaesthetic, intravenous antibiotics
- ii. incision over fractures
- iii. restoration of normal anatomy
- iv. fixation of fractures with plates and screws
- v. check x-ray
- vi. wound closure with stiches/sutures
- vii. back slab

THE RISKS OF SURGERY

All surgical procedures carry some risk. The risk of complications with ankle surgery is low. Some of the risks with include:

- Infection
- Problems with wound healing
- Nerve injury – this may results in numbness, tingling and/or pins and needles at the top of the foot
- Deep venous thrombosis/pulmonary embolism. (The risk of DVT increases with smoking, the oral contraceptive pill and hormone replacement therapy, immobility and obesity).
- Anaesthetic complications
- Drug allergy
- Ongoing pain

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 stitches/sutures: 10-14 days.

Clexane injections to prevent deep venous thrombosis: 14 days. Pain killers may be required: Up to 2 weeks. Antibiotics for up to 2 weeks.

You may require the use of crutches for up to 6 weeks. Post operative physiotherapy will generally commence at 6 weeks. A plaster or boot needs to be worn in bed for 6 weeks.

Return to most activities: 6 months. Full recovery: Up to 12 months.

Some patients will require removal of their plates and screws from 6 months following their original surgery.

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 0500.

After hours please contact the hospital where your surgery was performed.