

Ankle Arthroscopy

Ankle arthroscopy is keyhole surgery used to treat a variety of ankle problems. It is commonly used to treat and assess problems such as:

- Ankle bony 'spurs' (osteophytes).
- Loose bodies (chips of bone or cartilage).
- Arthritis.
- Cartilage or bone damage (osteochondral lesions).
- Scarring / ligament damage.
- 'Impingement' (at the front or back of the ankle).
- Small fractures.
- Used in combination with ligament repair or reconstructive surgery.

The surgery is generally performed as a day case. A general anaesthetic will usually be given and a local anaesthetic is injected around the ankle to numb some of the pain following surgery.

Two or three 'keyholes' are made for small cameras and instruments to see into the joint and 'clean up' or treat problems.

The surgery usually takes between 30 and 60 minutes.

After surgery you will go home a few hours later once you have recovered. You will need a responsible adult to pick you up from hospital.

RECOVERY

Crutches are required for the first few days until it is comfortable to walk on your foot unaided.

Generally, full weight-bearing is allowed as is comfortable. Occasionally you may be instructed by Dr Zilko to be non weight-bearing (this is always required following a microfracture procedure). Some arthroscopic procedures require immobilisation in a boot after the surgery.

Please **REST** and **ELEVATE** your foot strictly for the first 48 hours and then keep it mostly rested and elevated for the first week. Icing for 20 minutes two or three times daily for the first 3-5 days can help with swelling and pain.

The outer soft bandage can be removed 48 hours after surgery and then an elastic 'tubigrip' applied to help control swelling. The stick-on plastic dressings should be left on until your review – if these fall off please replace with a bandaid. A small amount of bleeding on the dressings is normal.

The foot and ankle should be moved up and down to prevent stiffening and blood clots.

If you require a boot, please follow Dr Zilko's instructions regarding when this is allowed to come off.

Physiotherapy may be started after 10 days if required. Stationary bike exercise can start 5-7 days post-op.

For right ankle surgery (with no boot), you can't drive for 1 week or until walking comfortably with no crutches.

TIME OFF WORK & SPORT

Desk work	4-7 days
Light duties	1-2 weeks
Standing / heavy work	3-5 weeks
Sports	8-12 weeks
Full recovery	3-6 months

RISKS

The risks of arthroscopic ankle surgery are rare but include: anaesthetic complications, infection, nerve/cartilage/tendon damage, stiffness, and blood clots (DVT/PE).