

OS34lite Arthroscopy of the Ankle

Expires end of December 2019

A more detailed version of this procedure specific information sheet is available. Please ask your health practitioner at Joondalup Health Campus for a copy.

Write questions or notes here:



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This document will give you information about an arthroscopy of the ankle. If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

What is an arthroscopy of your ankle?

An arthroscopy (keyhole surgery) allows your surgeon to see inside your ankle using a camera inserted through small cuts on your skin. Your surgeon can diagnose problems such as damage to the joint surface or ligaments, and arthritis.

What are the benefits of surgery?

The aim is to confirm exactly what the problem is and for many people the problem can be treated at the same time.

Are there any alternatives to surgery?

Problems inside your ankle can often be diagnosed using a magnetic scan (MRI scan) but you may then need an arthroscopy to treat the problem.

What does the operation involve?

Various anaesthetic techniques are possible. The operation usually takes 30 to 45 minutes. Your surgeon will insert a camera through small cuts around your ankle (see figure 1). They will wash out any loose material caused by wear of the joint surfaces and remove any spurs of bone or swelling of the lining of your ankle joint. If you have torn your ankle ligaments, you may need a reconstruction operation.

What complications can happen?

1 General complications

- Pain
- Bleeding
- Infection of the surgical site (wound)
- Unsightly scarring
- Blood clots
- Difficulty passing urine

2 Specific complications

- Damage to nerves around your ankle
- Compartment syndrome, where the calf muscles swell and get tight
- Infection in your ankle joint
- Severe pain, stiffness and loss of use of your ankle (complex regional pain syndrome)

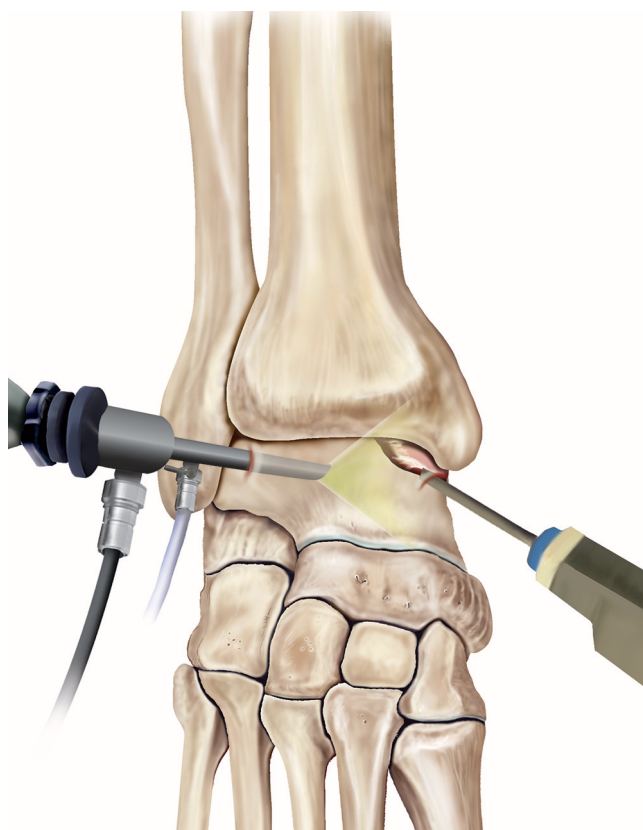


Figure 1

An arthroscopy of the ankle

How soon will I recover?

You should be able to go home the same day. It is common for your ankle to be a little swollen for a few weeks. Walking can be uncomfortable. Regular exercise should help you to return to normal activities as soon as possible. Before you start exercising, ask the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

Most people make a good recovery and can return to normal activities.

Summary

An arthroscopy allows your surgeon to diagnose and treat some common problems affecting your ankle, without the need for a large cut on your skin. This may reduce the amount of pain you feel and speed up your recovery.

Acknowledgements

Author: Mr Stephen Milner DM FRCS (Tr. & Orth.)
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