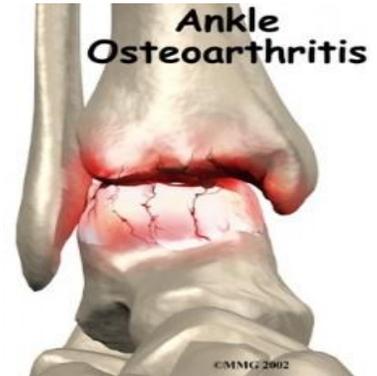




Ankle Arthritis

Arthritis is a general term for a group of more than 100 diseases. “Arthritis” means “joint inflammation.” When it affects the ankle joint, arthritis can produce swelling, pain and may eventually result in deformity, loss of joint function and decreased ability to walk.

The most common form of ankle arthritis is osteoarthritis. For more information on this topic, read “Osteoarthritis of the Foot and Ankle.” Similar symptoms may be caused by another form of arthritis, rheumatoid arthritis.



Arthritis Surgery

Patients who undergo surgery to correct arthritis in the foot are often diabetics with a type of arthritis known as *Charcot Foot*. The average age of patients developing a Charcot foot is 40 years. About one-third of patients develop a Charcot foot in both feet and/or ankles. This form of arthritis can develop suddenly and without pain. Quite suddenly, the bones in the foot and/or ankle can spontaneously fracture and fragment, often causing a severe deformity.

The arch of the foot often collapses, and pressure areas develop on the bottom of the foot which can lead to open sores or ulcers.

While many of these deformities can be treated with nonsurgical care, surgery may be required. Such instances may include:

- Chronic deformity with increased plantar pressures and risk of ulcers.
- Chronic deformity with significant instability that cannot be corrected by braces.
- Significant deformity that may include ulcers that do not heal or respond to therapy.

Surgical procedures used to treat arthritis include:

- **Hindfoot and ankle realignment.** This kind of procedure is usually prescribed when there is significant instability resulting in a patient being unable to walk. Various types of internal fixation are placed within the foot during these kinds of procedures.
- **Midfoot realignment.** This kind of procedure is usually prescribed when there is significant instability of the middle portion of the foot. During a midfoot realignment, various types of internal fixation devices are placed within the foot.
- **Ostectomy.** In this procedure, a portion of bone is removed from the bottom of the foot. It is usually performed for a wound on the bottom of the foot that is secondary to pressure from a bony prominence.
- **Arthroscopy.** Arthroscopic surgery on the foot and ankle may be used as a diagnostic or treatment procedure or both. A small instrument called an arthroscope penetrates the skin through small incisions. Tiny cameras can be inserted through the arthroscope and allow the surgeon to accurately see the area and/or damage. Other small instruments can also be inserted through the arthroscope to make surgical corrections. Because arthroscopy is less-invasive and traumatic than traditional surgery, it reduces the risk of infection and swelling and allows for significantly speedier healing and recovery. Most arthroscopic surgeries of the foot and ankle are performed on a same day outpatient basis using a local anesthetic with IV sedation.

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