



Arthroscopic Triple Arthrodesis

Introduction

Arthroscopic triple arthrodesis is a surgical procedure designed to address severe pain and instability in the foot and ankle caused by underlying conditions such as arthritis, post-traumatic deformities, or congenital deformities. This leaflet provides essential information for patients considering or scheduled for the procedure, covering its purpose, benefits, risks, and recovery process.

What is Arthroscopic Triple Arthrodesis?

Triple arthrodesis involves the fusion of three joints in the foot: the subtalar joint, the talonavicular joint, and the calcaneocuboid joint. The arthroscopic technique utilizes minimally invasive tools and cameras to perform the surgery with smaller incisions, reducing tissue damage and enhancing recovery compared to traditional open surgery.

Why is it Performed?

The procedure is recommended for patients experiencing:

- Severe foot and ankle pain that limits daily activities
- Deformities causing misalignment or instability
- Arthritis that has not responded to conservative treatments
- Unsuccessful outcomes from previous surgeries

Benefits of Arthroscopic Triple Arthrodesis

- Reduction of chronic pain
- Improved foot stability
- Correction of deformities for better function
- Minimally invasive approach leading to smaller scars and shorter recovery times

Preparing for the Surgery

Preoperative Assessment

Patients will undergo evaluations including:

- Medical history review
- Physical examination of the foot and ankle
- Imaging such as X-rays, CT scans, or MRIs to assess the condition of the joints

Before the Procedure

- Follow your surgeon's instructions on fasting prior to surgery
- Discuss medications with your doctor, as some may need to be paused
- Arrange for assistance at home during the initial recovery period

The Procedure

Arthroscopic triple arthrodesis is typically performed under general or regional anaesthesia. Your surgeon will take the following steps:

- Make small incisions around the foot and ankle
- Insert an arthroscope to visualize the joints
- Remove damaged cartilage and prepare the joints for fusion
- Use screws, plates, or other devices to stabilize the fusion

The procedure generally takes 2–3 hours, depending on the complexity of the condition.

Recovery Process

Postoperative Care

- Patients will wear a cast or brace to immobilize the foot and ankle
- Keep the foot elevated to reduce swelling
- Follow prescribed pain management protocols

Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation is critical for optimal recovery. It includes:

- Physical therapy to enhance strength and mobility
- Gradual weight-bearing progression as advised by your surgeon
- Maintenance of good hygiene for incisions to prevent infection

Expected Timeline

- Initial recovery: 6–8 weeks
- Return to normal activities: 6–12 months

Risks and Complications

Like all surgical procedures, arthroscopic triple arthrodesis carries risks, including:

- Infection
- Blood clots
- Incomplete fusion of the joints
- Nerve damage
- Persistent pain or stiffness

Your surgeon will discuss these risks in detail and monitor your recovery closely.

Long-Term Outlook

Arthroscopic triple arthrodesis is designed to provide lasting relief and improve quality of life. Most patients experience significant pain reduction and enhanced stability. However, the procedure permanently limits motion in the fused joints and may alter gait mechanics. Regular follow-ups are essential to address any concerns and ensure optimal outcomes.

Conclusion

Arthroscopic triple arthrodesis is a valuable option for individuals suffering from debilitating foot and ankle conditions. By understanding the procedure, preparation, and recovery process, patients can actively participate in their journey towards better health. If you have any questions or concerns, consult your healthcare provider to ensure you're fully informed and prepared.