

# **What to Expect After Having an Ankle Arthroscopy for Osteochondral Defect and/or Loose body**

**For patients of Dr. Lau**

## **What is an ankle arthroscopy?**

An osteochondral defect is a cyst (damaged piece of bone and cartilage), which is loose. A loose body is a loose piece of bone or cartilage. "Arthroscopic" means that the surgery happens through 2 small cuts instead of 1 large cut.

## **Why do I need this surgery?**

The loose piece of bone or cartilage can get stuck in the joint causing locking and pain. We do this surgery to lessen pain when the ankle moves. It may make the ankle move easier.

**Note:** The surgery does not remove any existing arthritis. Your pain could come back if your arthritis gets worse.

## **What to expect after the surgery**

### **On the day of your surgery:**

Your foot is wrapped in a bandage and you wear a tensor bandage (long strip of stretchable cloth that puts gentle pressure on the area). Do not change the bandage.

Expect your foot to be numb for 12 to 24 hours after the surgery.

To manage pain:

- Prop up your foot when you are sitting or lying down by putting pillows under your foot. This lessens swelling.
- Put ice on your foot for 20 minutes when needed. This lessens swelling.
- Take pain medications as you need.

### **2 days after surgery:**

Do not put any weight on your foot. Keep using crutches, a walker or knee scooter

**When to call surgeon:**

Call Dr. Lau's office at 416 603 6292 right away if:

- your wound is still bleeding the day after surgery
- your foot feels numb or tingling the day after surgery
- your toes change colour (purple, white, or spotted) at any time

**2 weeks after surgery:**

You have a follow-up appointment in Fracture Clinic at Toronto Western.

- We take new x-rays to check on your recovery.
- We remove the bandage and sutures (stitches).
- You start physiotherapy.

You can start walking on the foot normally as pain permits.

**6 weeks after surgery:**

You have a follow-up appointment at Dr. Lau's office at Toronto Western.

**What side effects can I expect?**

Your ankle may be swollen for 6 to 12 months after surgery. It may feel throbbing, achy and uncomfortable at the end of the day. This is normal and gets better over time.

**For more information:**

Dr. Johnny T.C. Lau, MD, MSc, FRCSC  
Orthopaedic Surgeon, Foot & Ankle Surgery  
Assistant Professor, University of Toronto

**Phone:** 416 603 6292

**Fax:** 416 603 3437

**Address:**

Schroeder Arthritis Institute  
University Health Network  
Toronto Western Hospital  
Room 13MC423  
399 Bathurst Street  
Toronto, Ontario M5T 2S8