

What to Expect After Having Joint Arthroplasty to Your Ankle

For patients of Dr. Lau

Why do I need this surgery?

You have arthritis in your ankle. Joint arthroplasty (replacement) is a surgery to remove the arthritis in your ankle and replace it with metal to make a new joint. We do this surgery to allow the ankle joint to keep moving and improve pain.

What to expect after the surgery

On the day of your surgery:

Your foot is wrapped in a bandage and you wear a splint (soft cast). 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.
- Take pain medications as you need.

Important: Do not put any weight on your foot. Use crutches, a walker or knee scooter to move around.

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).
- We put a cast on your ankle.

Do not put any weight on your foot Continue to use crutches, a walker or knee scooter.

6 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 your cast and give you a fracture boot (special boot that keeps your ankle safe and comfortable).
- You start physiotherapy to improve the strength and flexibility in your foot.

Start walking on the foot while wearing the fracture boot. Slowly put more weight on your foot until you can walk normally.

3 months after surgery:

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

- We take new x-rays to check on your recovery.
- You continue with physiotherapy

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