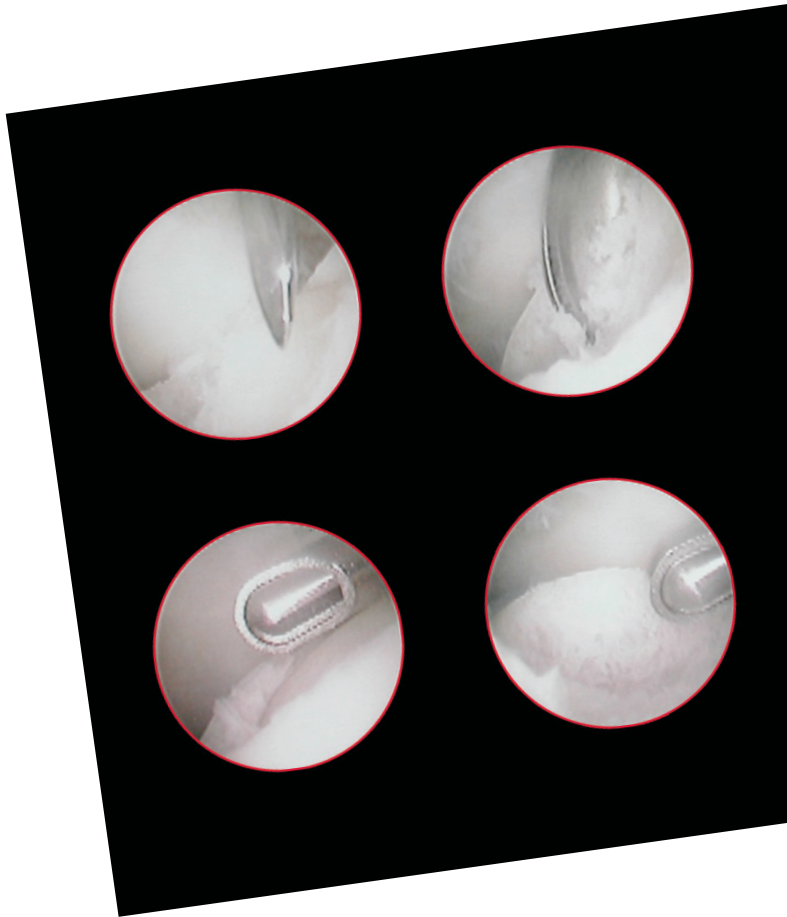



# Arthroscopy of the Ankle (anterior)





The Department of Orthopaedics offers specialist medical and surgical treatments on musculoskeletal disorders, joint replacements, foot and ankle disorders, among other trauma injuries. Our consultants and surgeons work closely with sports medicine physicians, physiotherapists, podiatrists and other healthcare professionals to help patients return to their normal activities after surgery.

## What is an ankle arthroscopy?

An ankle arthroscopy is a 'keyhole' procedure that uses a fibre-optic camera to assess and treat ankle problems. Two small cuts are made on either side of the ankle to allow a small camera and surgical instruments to access the joint.

Procedures that can be achieved/performed with arthroscopy include:

- **Debridement and washout:** Scar tissue and bony spurs causing pain in the ankle's movement (known as impingement) are removed and the joint 'washed out' with saline
- **Removal of loose bodies:** This includes bone fragments or cartilage which may have gotten lodged in the joint
- **Debridement and drilling of cartilage lesions:** Removing scar tissue from the damaged cartilage area (osteochondral lesion) and drilling the bone to promote the formation of new cartilage

## What are the treatment options?

Physiotherapy may be helpful to relieve symptoms, but it has variable long-term success, depending on your diagnosis. An ankle support brace may be worn to relieve symptoms, but certain ankle conditions may require invasive procedures such as surgery.



# After surgery

## Will it hurt?

Local anaesthetic will be injected into your ankle and around the small incisions to relieve pain during the immediate post-operative period. You will be prescribed painkillers and should take them before the local anaesthesia wears off. A five-day course of anti-inflammatory drugs is usually prescribed unless you cannot take them.

## How should I care for my wound?

After surgery, your wounds will be stitched and your ankle bandaged. Although the bandage can be removed 48 hours later, you are advised to keep your wound covered, clean and dry until it has healed completely (approximately 10 days).

Some swelling in the joint is expected and this is caused by the fluid used during surgery and from your body's reaction to the surgery. It is normal and can last up to a few months, depending on the individual. Rest your leg above your heart level to bring swells down in the first two weeks after surgery.

If your wounds become red, swollen or very tender, or you notice a discharge, please contact our clinic or go to the nearest Emergency Department.

## When can I start walking?

It is important to let your doctor advise when you can start putting weight through your operated leg again. Crutches will be provided if your doctor feels it is necessary for you to use them. Avoid running or engaging in strenuous activity until you feel completely comfortable to do so. This may take up to six weeks or even longer depending on the ankle procedure you had.

## How much rest do I need?

You will be given a two-week Medical Certificate (MC) to rest and recover. Depending on your job, a longer MC may be given.

## When can I drive?

Do not drive for the next few weeks after surgery. You must be fully mobile and comfortable to make an emergency stop without worrying if it might hurt to do so. Having a right ankle fracture will affect your ability to drive for a longer period than a left ankle fracture.

# Potential risks and complications

Developing a complication after surgery is rare, but it may happen. Possible complications include:

- Bleeding and/or excessive swelling.  
To prevent this, elevate your leg as much as you can, especially in the first two weeks after surgery.
- Damage to the structures around your ankle, including the cartilage, tendons, nerves and ligaments.
- Infection of the wound or joint (very rare, less than 1%).
- Numbness around the 'keyhole' scars or sensitivity in the scars. This will usually resolve by itself, but it can be helpful to rub the scar to desensitise them when they have healed.
- Thromboembolic complications (blood clots in the large veins of the leg or lung) such as Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT) or Pulmonary Embolism (PE).  
While this is possible after any surgery on the lower limbs, the risk is extremely low (around 0.3%) in foot and ankle surgeries. Blood-thinning medication can be prescribed to prevent blood clots. However, because the risks associated with blood-thinning medication are greater than the risk of developing blood clots, such blood-thinning medication are routinely not prescribed<sup>2,3</sup> unless deemed necessary by your doctor.

## Follow-up appointments

You will usually be reviewed at our Outpatient Clinic two weeks after your surgery. Your stitches will be removed and you will be seen again six weeks and three months later.



*The information in this brochure is not exhaustive. If you would like to know more, please approach any of our friendly staff.*

For further information:  
[www.footEducation.com](http://www.footEducation.com)

- References:** 1. **Rolf C, Saro C, Engstrom B, Wredmark T, Movin T, Karlsson J.** Ankle arthroscopy under local and general anaesthesia for diagnostic evaluation and treatment. *Scand J Med Sci Sports* 1996; 6-4:255-8.
2. **Mizel MS, Temple HT, Michelson JD, Alvarez RG, Clanton TO, Frey CC, Gegenheimer AP, Hurwitz SR, Lutter LD, Mankey MG, Mann RA, Miller RA, Richardson EG, Schon LC, Thompson FM, Yodlowski ML.** Thromboembolism after foot and ankle surgery. A multicenter study. *Clin Orthop Relat Res* 1998-348:180-5.
3. **Solis G, Saxby T.** Incidence of DVT following surgery of the foot and ankle. *Foot Ankle Int* 2002;23-5:411-4.

## For more information

### Ng Teng Fong General Hospital and Jurong Community Hospital

1 Jurong East St 21, Singapore 609606

[www.ntfgh.com.sg](http://www.ntfgh.com.sg) | [www.jch.com.sg](http://www.jch.com.sg)

### Clinic opening hours

Monday – Friday: 8.30am – 5.30pm

Saturday: 8.30am – 12.30pm (Selected clinics only\*)

Dental Clinic: Monday – Thursday: 8.00am – 5.30pm, Friday: 8.00am – 5.00pm

*\*Please refer to our websites for more details.*

### General enquiries & appointments

General enquiries line: 6908 2222 (24-hr)

Fax: 6716 5500 | Email: [contactus@nuhs.edu.sg](mailto:contactus@nuhs.edu.sg)

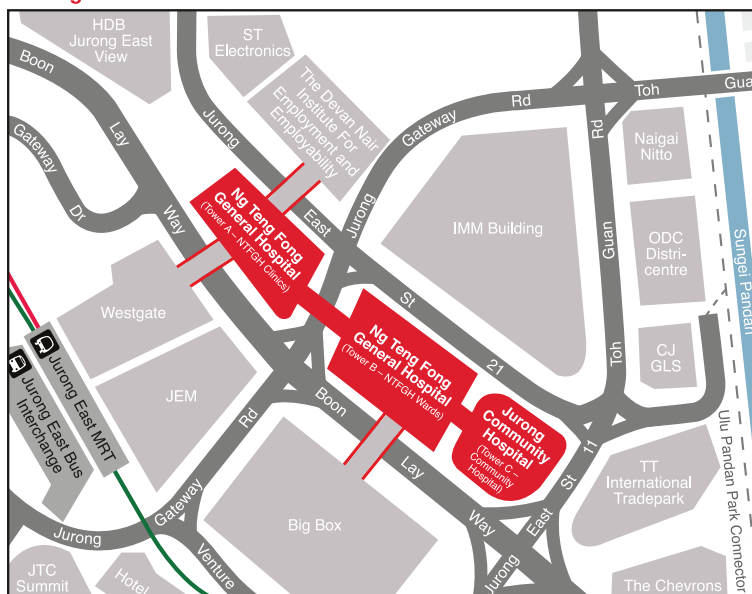
Appointment line: 6908 2222 (Monday – Friday: 8.00am – 5.30pm, Saturday: 8.00am – 12.30pm)

Fax: 6716 2200 | Email: [appointment@nuhs.edu.sg](mailto:appointment@nuhs.edu.sg)

Dental appointment line: 6716 2233 (Monday – Friday: 8.00am – 5.30pm)

Fax: 6716 2200 | Email: [JHCampus\\_Dental@nuhs.edu.sg](mailto:JHCampus_Dental@nuhs.edu.sg)

## Getting there



### By train

Alight at Jurong East MRT Station

### By bus

#### Jurong East Bus Interchange

41, 49, 51, 52, 66, 66B, 78, 78A, 79, 79A, 97, 97E, 98, 98M, 105, 143, 143M, 160, 160A, 160M, 183, 183B, 197, 333, 334, 335, 506

#### Along Boon Lay Way

49, 99, 333, Private bus service 625, 990

### Disclaimer:

The information in this brochure is meant for educational purposes and should not be used as a substitute for medical diagnosis or treatment. Please seek your doctor's advice before starting any treatment or if you have any questions related to your health, physical fitness or medical condition. Information is accurate at the time of printing.