

## Follow-up

An appointment will be booked for you to be seen in Outpatients two weeks after the operation.

## Any complaints or comments?

If you have any complaints or comments please contact the Doctors or Nurses straightaway.

## Contact Numbers

Day Surgery Unit Pilgrim Hospital	01205 445364
Day Surgery Unit Lincoln Hospital	01522 573144
Day Surgery Unit Grantham Hospital	01476 464408
Day Surgery Unit Louth Hospital	01507 600100

## References

If you require a full list of references for this leaflet please email [patient.information@ulh.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@ulh.nhs.uk)

The Trust endeavours to ensure that the information given here is accurate and impartial.



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# Ankle/Foot Fusion Surgery

Department of Orthopaedics

[www.ulh.nhs.uk](http://www.ulh.nhs.uk)

## **Aim of the leaflet**

This leaflet aims to provide information to patients who require fusion surgery to their ankle or hindfoot. It will explain what will happen and what to expect after your surgery.

## **What is it?**

Arthritis, which is due to wear and tear, can affect any joint in the ankle or foot. When the pain from arthritis reaches levels which can no longer be managed by painkillers or braces, your surgeon may offer you fusion surgery. This means joining up bones which form a joint thereby eliminating the pain.

## **What does the surgery involve?**

Fusion surgery involves removing the remaining cartilage from the worn joint and holding it together, with or without metalwork, so that the bones fuse together.

## **After your operation**

### **Pain Relief**

This operation is potentially painful. You will have local anaesthetic injected into the operated area during your operation. You may be allowed to go home the same day or in the next few days. You will be provided with painkillers to take home. Please take your painkillers regularly over the next few days.

### **Care of dressings**

You are likely to be in a plaster and may not be allowed to put weight on it for a period specified by your surgeon. Keep the plaster and dressings intact, clean and dry until your follow-up appointment. You will be provided with crutches to aid walking if required. Keep your foot rested up whenever possible to keep swelling down.

## **Stitches**

If they are not the dissolving type, your stitches or staples will be removed at your follow-up appointment.

## **Driving**

You may not be allowed to drive until your plaster comes off; please check with your surgeon.

## **Work and activity**

If you are able to get to work without driving and can perform your job with minimal strain on your foot then you may return when you are comfortable. Your surgeon can provide you with a certificate for time off work if required.

## **Potential risks and complications**

There is a risk of bleeding or infection from the wound site. If your wound bleeds through the plaster or you notice an unpleasant smell or discharge, seek medical advice as soon as possible.

There is a small risk of developing blood clots in your leg. Your surgeon will discuss with you the most appropriate ways to prevent this.

There is a small risk that other joints in the foot or the limb may develop arthritis or have worsening symptoms from pre-existing arthritis.

There is a very small risk that following the operation the bones may not fuse together; the risk is higher if you smoke.

You may have numbness around the scar, which should improve with time.

Remember that it can take many months for a foot to fully recover from surgery, particularly from the swelling.