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Adult and Paediatric Orthopaedic Surgeon  
Specialising in the Foot and Ankle

## **Open Reduction Internal Fixation (ORIF) Ankle**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Some unstable ankle fractures require surgery known as “open reduction and internal fixation”. This involves restoring the normal anatomy of the bones of the ankle and holding them in place with purpose-built plates and screws. The good news is that most patients have a very good functional result following surgery and are able to return to pre-injury activities.

### **THE PROCEDURE**

There are a number of steps to this procedure:

1. General Anaesthetic
2. Administration of intravenous antibiotics
3. 1 – 3 Incisions made over ankle depending on location of fractures
4. Fractures reduced anatomically and held with titanium plates and screws
5. Joint washed out with normal saline to remove inflammatory agents
6. Intra-operative check Xray
7. Wound Closure with sutures
8. Plaster Backslab

### **RISKS & COMPLICATIONS**

Every surgical procedure carries some risk. These risks are largely uncommon and many are rare.

They include:

- Anaesthetic complications
- Drug reactions
- Wound infection
- Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT)/Pulmonary embolism (PE)
- Sensory nerve injury
- Chronic Regional Pain Syndrome
- Ongoing Pain
- Stiffness
- Post-traumatic Arthritis

## **POST OPERATIVE PROTOCOL**

1 - 2 nights in hospital for observation, training with hospital physiotherapist to use crutches/knee scooter  
Backslab plaster and its dressings kept dry and intact until first post-op appointment  
Keep foot elevated as much as possible, for the first 2 weeks  
Bloodthinner (Xarelto) taken for first 6 weeks whilst non-weightbearing  
Pain killers required for up to 2 weeks  
First post-op appointment roughly 2 weeks post surgery for wound check and conversion to full cast or boot depending on nature of fracture  
Weightbearing – nonweightbearing for first 4 - 6 weeks,  
Weightbearing in moonboot from 4 – 12 weeks  
Return to most activities by 6 months  
Full recovery up to 12 months

## **PROBLEMS AND CONCERNS**

If you have any queries or concerns, contact Dr. Ling's rooms on 9650 4782 between business hours. After hours or on weekends, if your matter is urgent, please present to the Emergency Department at Prince of Wales Hospital if you are an adult, or Sydney Children's Hospital if the patient is your child, and you will be seen by the Orthopaedic Registrar on call, who will contact Dr Ling directly ) is weeks stuck is constantly evolving and we need a website they can do this