



Information Sheet

Arthritis

Osteoarthritis in the foot is usually the result of a previous injury however it can also be the result of repetitive bending and stooping and although this condition tends to affect people over the age of fifty, it can also occur in people as young as twenty. This condition can cause your big toe to become stiff, swollen and painful, which can make walking painful.

Once you are referred to us you will have an x-ray which will determine the cause of your condition, for example, how much arthritis is present. An x-ray will also help us determine whether there are any bone spurs or other abnormalities present.

This condition is commonly treated through surgical intervention. The three most common procedures are:

Debridement during arthroscopic (keyhole) surgery is where the area around the affected bone will be cleaned and any bone spurs and deformities will be removed.

Cheilectomy. This is a minor procedure performed to remove the bony bump (osteophyte or dorsal bunion) – it is carefully burred away to restore the joint's normal shape. We would expect 60-70% of the pain and stiffness you experienced before your operation to be removed.

Fusion. Following either debridement or cheilectomy it is possible that you will be able to walk almost immediately. However, with this procedure because the joint surfaces causing the pain are removed and the remaining areas placed next to each other to allow fusion, you may not be able to put pressure on your foot for several weeks.