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Are You a Candidate for Ankle Replacement Surgery?

Arthritic hips and knees are replaced all the time—but did you know that arthritic ankles can also be replaced? In fact, ankle replacements in the U.S. more than doubled last year, thanks in part to technological advances in ankle implants (prostheses).

Total ankle replacement surgery—also called ankle arthroplasty—involves replacing the damaged joint with an artificial joint. The procedure greatly improves function for people who cannot perform everyday activities without experiencing severe pain. Rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis and previous injuries are the most common causes of this pain.

In the past, the gold standard for treating these problematic patients was a fusion, or arthrodesis, in which the joint is removed and the bones are fused. This procedure reduced pain, but also rendered the ankle immobile.

What can you expect from a total ankle replacement? Our patients enjoy vastly improved function of their ankle, with pain-free weight bearing and range of motion.

- ▶ **However, not everyone is a candidate for an ankle replacement. We don't recommend it to patients with poor circulation, loss of sensation, or significant deformity related to birth defect or previous traumatic events.**

For those who do meet the criteria for consideration, ankle replacement offers tremendous advantages over previous treatment for severe ankle pain related to arthritic changes.

Ask us about ankle replacement options on your next visit.



High Ankle vs. Lateral Ankle Sprains: What's the Difference?

Ankle sprains may be one of the most common injuries, but they're also commonly misdiagnosed. That's because the two major types of sprained ankles, high ankle sprains and lateral ankle sprains, often look the same, even though they affect entirely different ligaments.

The less common type, a high ankle sprain, is often mistaken for a lateral sprain. Misdiagnosis can delay getting the right treatment and that can impair recovery. Pain, swelling, limited motion, and bruising in the entire ankle region can occur in

both high ankle sprains and lateral ankle sprains. The difference lies in where the injury occurs and which ligaments are involved.

In diagnosing an ankle sprain, it's important for us to understand how the injury occurred. Lateral sprains are caused by the foot turning inward, whereas high ankle sprains are the result of the foot being forced outward.

High ankle sprains can be more complicated, because this region has five ligaments connecting two bones in the leg, compared with three ligaments that can be affected in lateral ankle sprains. The more ligaments involved and the worse they are torn, the more severe the injury.

Any time you see bruising or the inability to bear weight on your foot after an injury, it's best to make an appointment with our office for an examination. It is also important to remember that even though you can walk on an injured foot or ankle, it doesn't mean there isn't a severe injury present.

Spring Walking Checklist

Spring is a great time to get yourself up off the couch and get on your way to better health. Don't let foot pain slow you down. Follow these helpful tips for your springtime walks and enjoy the weather!

- ▶ **Wear supportive shoes.**
- ▶ **Wear 'moisture wicking' socks.**
- ▶ **Stretch muscles before and after your walk.**
- ▶ **If you've been inactive over the winter, don't overdo it. Gradually work into a walking program.**
- ▶ **Walkers can frequently experience heel pain, especially if you've been inactive during the winter months. Often ibuprofen and daily stretching exercises can provide relief.**
- ▶ **If you experience pain in your heels or ankles that does not disappear within two weeks, schedule an exam with our office.**

Don't let foot pain slow you down!

