

# Ankle Osteoarthritis

The aim of this leaflet is to give you some understanding of the problems you have with your ankle and to provide some advice on how to manage this. It is not a substitute for professional healthcare advice and should be used along with information you may be given by your GP or Allied Health Professional.

## What is Ankle Osteoarthritis

Ankle Osteoarthritis is degenerative change in the ankle joint. This results from reduction in the protective layer (cartilage) of the joint surface which leads to wear of the bony surface itself.

## Causes

- History of trauma
- Ankle malalignment
- Ligament or muscle deficiency
- Previous surgery
- Bony deformity

## Symptoms

- Pain which has increased gradually over time
- Pain increases with weight bearing
- Pain reduced when non-weightbearing
- Aching pain
- Pain in ankle area
- Loss of movement

## Treatment

- Pain killers
- Supportive footwear – please see footwear advice leaflet
- Immobilisation of joint – Orthotics
  - Assessment for a removable custom device designed to reduce/eliminate the movement at the ankle
  - This can be discussed with your GP/AHP for referral to your local Orthotic Department when appropriate
- Weight loss if appropriate
- Surgery – Consult you GP if you would like an Surgical opinion
  - This may be surgical options or injections into the joint.

## Medication

Many people use medication to help them remain active and to cope with their pain and symptoms. It is recommended that you take your medication regularly. It is best to get advice from a GP or pharmacist.

### **Other Intervention**

There are other health interventions which may be more appropriate for your condition. These can be discussed with your health care practitioner.

### **Work**

It is usually recommended that you try to stay at work or get back to work as soon as possible. You do not need to be fully pain and symptom free to return to work. Research shows the longer you are off work the less likely it is that you return.

### **Investigations/do I need any special tests**

The main way we diagnose your ankle osteoarthritis is through what you tell us and by examining your ankle. Other investigations may be considered, these can be discussed with your health care professional.

Try to stay positive. There is a lot you can do to help yourself. Most symptoms do settle with time.

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