

## **Foot and Ankle Fusion (Arthrodesis) Information Sheet**

Ankle-(Tibio-Talar / Pantalar / Subtalar) Foot-(Midfoot / Talo-Navicular / Triple)

### **General indications for the procedure:**

The indications for the procedure are to alleviate pain related to arthritis and/or joint deformity.

### **Description of the Procedure:**

The procedure of joint fusion will consist of removal of arthritic cartilage, opposition of bony surfaces, proper alignment, and rigid internal fixation. The arthritic bones will be approached through an open incision and the arthritic surfaces will have all the cartilage removed. The bones will then be positioned directly against each other in an anatomically functional position and will then be held in that position by screws, plates, and/or staples. Bone graft, either from the patient's own body (often the shin, heel, or hip) or from a cadaver, may be required to help promote healing of the fusion site. The goal is to eliminate the joint between the two bones where the arthritis was present so that they may heal into one solid bone with no motion.

### **Risks of the Procedure:**

The risks associated with this procedure include infection at the surgical site, wound breakdown, postoperative bleeding, incomplete healing of the fusion (non-union), nerve injury, tendon injury, vascular injury, swelling, complex regional pain syndrome, compartment syndrome requiring surgical release of pressure within the leg, development of arthritis to neighboring joints, need for hardware removal, healing in misaligned position (mal-union), deep venous thrombosis, pulmonary embolus, excessive scar tissue formation, chronic pain, discoloration of the skin, possible need to further surgery, and risks of anesthesia.

### **Alternatives to Procedure:**

The alternatives to this procedure include non-operative treatment using prolonged bracing, splints, oral medications, and activity modifications.

### **Probable Consequences to Refusing Procedure:**

The probable consequences from refusing the procedure are progressive pain and progressive deformity from advancing arthritis.

### **Person(s) Performing the Procedure:**

The key portions of this procedure will be performed by an attending physician with the assistance of the Orthopaedic Resident Staff. The parts of the procedure by residents will be in accordance with hospital policies, based on their skill set, and under direct supervision of the attending physician.