

Ankle Replacement Surgery



What is ankle replacement surgery?

Ankle replacement surgery is the replacement of a damaged ankle joint with an artificial implant. The ankle joint (tibiotalar joint) is

where your shinbone (tibia) rests on top of a bone of your foot, the talus. Arthritis can affect this joint as well as other joints in the foot. Over time, the smooth cartilage on the surface of the bones wears away. This can result in pain, inflammation, and swelling of your joint. Ankle replacement surgery is a procedure to replace this

damaged joint to eliminate this pain and swelling.

Typically, the procedure takes place under general anesthesia. Your surgeon will make an incision in your ankle to access the affected joint. Next, your surgeon will remove the damaged parts of your tibia and talus bones. Your surgeon will attach artificial metal joints to the remaining bone

surfaces, with a piece of plastic inserted between them.

Why might I need ankle replacement surgery?

Ankle replacement surgery may make sense for you if you have severe arthritis in your ankle. This can cause symptoms like severe pain, inflammation, and stiffness, which can lead to difficulty

walking. The main types of ankle arthritis are:

- **Osteoarthritis.** This is “wear and tear” arthritis that develops in older adults.
- **Rheumatoid arthritis.** This is a system-wide autoimmune disease that affects the joints.

- **Arthritis.** This can happen because of a past injury of your joint.

If you have mild or moderate arthritis, your healthcare provider will probably recommend other treatments, like pain medicines, special shoe and foot inserts, physical therapy, or corticosteroid injections. If you still have severe symptoms that

interfere with your daily activities, your healthcare provider may recommend ankle replacement or another surgical procedure.

If your arthritis is not yet severe, arthroscopic debridement might be a better choice. Ankle fusion is another choice for people with severe arthritis of their ankle. Each of these

choices has its own risks and benefits. Talk to your healthcare provider about all of your treatment and surgical choices.