

## Ankle ORIF Recovery

The ankle joint is the area that the two bones in your leg, the tibia and the fibula, meet with the bones of the foot. It can occur that these bones, either both together or just one of them, can become fractured following an injury through work, sport or play. The term fracture is the medical term for a break in the bone. Sometimes a fracture will require an operation to correctly repair and align the bone. This is called an Open Reduction and Internal Fixation or an ORIF of the ankle. To repair the fracture, either a plate and screws may be required or the use of screws alone.



After your surgery you are usually put in a backslab of plaster and bandages applied to your leg and you will be non-weightbearing for the initial 2 weeks until your review appointment with Dr Bradshaw. During this period, you will be given pain medication and rest as much as possible is advised. You should elevate your leg as much as possible to reduce the occurrence of increased swelling. Ice therapy can be used to also help alleviate any swelling that may occur. This can be applied to the toes to ensure the bandaging stays dry. NEVER apply an ice pack directly to the skin, ensure that it is wrapped in a tea towel or something similar.



At your post-op appointment at 2 weeks the bandaging and sutures will be removed, and the wound checked. You will have a boot fitted and will be given your weightbearing instructions.



The boot is to remain on whenever you are moving about however, while resting and elevating your leg you can remove or open the boot to enable the wound to breathe and apply an ice pack for swelling management. At this time, you can start performing simple range of motion exercises to help reduce any stiffness of the joint. These exercises are simple ones that include pointing your foot up and down within comfort levels and making small circles with your foot. Do not do anything that causes pain.



The movement should be slow, smooth and controlled.  
Repeat steps 2 and 3 several times.