

This surgery requires 6 weeks in a CAM walker and on crutches, non-weight bearing. After this period, intensive physiotherapy rehabilitation is required.

FUSION SURGERY

Joints that have arthritis in this condition can only be treated with fusion. This involves “gluing” the joints together with screws and / or staples to eliminate movement and pain. This requires 3 months in a CAM walker and on crutches.

RISKS OF SURGERY

Possible risks associated with surgery include infection, wound healing problems, damage to nerve and / or blood vessels, recurrent deformities and non-union, swelling and blood clotting (Deep Vein Thrombosis / Pulmonary Embolism).

ADULT ACQUIRED FLAT FOOT



Tayside OrthoSports

INTRODUCTION

Adult acquired flat foot is a change in the shape of the foot of an adult, usually resulting from a collapse of the arch. This is a different condition from pes planus (flat feet), which is a common condition seen in up to 20% of people, and which often has no long term consequences.

Adult acquired flat foot is usually a wear and tear condition resulting from failure of the structures, which help to hold up the arch of your foot. Most often it is due to failure of the tibialis posterior tendon. It can also be due to arthritis within the foot.

DIAGNOSIS

Adult acquired flat foot is a change in the shape of the arch and foot, in one or both feet, of an adult who previously had a normal arch. This may or may not be painful. Your surgeon will take a thorough history and physical examination, and may request further investigations such as X-rays and possibly ultrasound or MRI scan.

TREATMENT

In cases of early disease treatment does not usually require surgery.

FOOTWEAR MODIFICATION

Footwear which helps to support the arch of your foot will lessen stress on the tendons and joints of your foot. This will lessen both pain and any further damage to these structures. The easiest way to achieve this is with sports shoes or walking shoes, which often have a good inbuilt arch support. An alternative is to have a custom made insert provided by a podiatrist or orthotist.

MEDICATION

Anti-inflammatory medications, and even simple analgesics, will help improve the pain of adult acquired flat foot. Caution is advised in those patients with severe indigestion or previous stomach ulcer problems. If stomach pain develops the medication should be discontinued.

ACTIVITY MODIFICATION

Limiting weight bearing exercise and activities will reduce stress on the tendons and joints of your foot. Non-weight bearing exercises such as cycling, swimming or aqua-aerobics are recommended.

PHYSIOTHERAPY

Tendon and joint damage is often so severe in these conditions that physiotherapy can only play a minor role in treatment.

BRACING

A lace up ankle brace will often provide support around the ankle and lessen pain and stress on the affected tendons.

SURGERY

The type of surgery required, if non-surgical treatment fails, depends upon the severity of disease. If the tendon has failed, and there is no joint arthritis, then a tendon transfer may be recommended. This maintains joint movement and helps reconstruct the arch of the foot.

If arthritis is present in the foot surgery involves fusion of the arthritic joints. This lessens pain, but also results in loss of movement.

TENDON TRANSFER SURGERY

This involves using the flexor digitorum longus (FDL) tendon, to take over the function of the tibialis posterior tendon. This is often supplemented with an osteotomy (realignment) of the heel bone.

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