

SUMMARY

Ankle arthroscopy is progressing rapidly during the last years . At first , arthroscopy was common only in the knee and shoulder joints injuries .

Ankle arthroscopy has many advantages as it allows for direct visualization of the intraarticular structures without traditional surgical procedures .It also allows for stress testing in cases of joint laxity and evaluation of the competency of the ligamentous structures surrounding the ankle joint. Moreover, arthroscopy offers both patient and surgeon a minimal dissection and rapid rehabilitation . However ,because of the special anatomy of the ankle joint , the ankle arthroscopy is more difficult than knee arthroscopy.That is why it is important to be familiar with both normal and abnormal ankle anatomy.

Recently , ankle arthroscopy has become an important tool for both diagnostic and therapeutic purposes , and this is because of the widespread of ankle problems .

Chronic ankle pain either with or without past history of trauma is considered the chief complaint that may indicates for arthroscopy. It goes without saying that preoperative investigations should be done before deciding the athroscopy , most important plain X-ray , computed tomography (C.T) and MRI .It is not wise to proceed directly to arthroscopy , it is important to try medical treatment according to the medical history and progression of the condition unless there is an emergency or a clear pathology appears in the plain X-ray , C.T. or MRI . Although the arthroscopy is the most minimal invasive surgery could be done , the surgeon should not be in a hurry to use it as the arthroscopy is still a surgical intervention that has its hazards and complications .

Diagnostic arthroscopy is indicated for diagnosis of chronic painful ankle when all medical and non operative measures fails to improve the condition .

Currently , therapeutic arthroscopy is used for :

- . Transchondral talar dome fractures.
- . Acute articular fractures with heamoarthrosis .
- . Synovitis .
- . Intraarticular loose bodies removal .
- . Inflammatory synovitis .
- . Degenerative joint disease .
- . Soft tissue impingement.

Ankle arthroscopy is more complicated than that of other joints , this is because the small volume and narrow portals through which the surgeon works , beside the neurovascular bundle that traverse close to the entry points .

Like other joints arthroscopy , ankle arthroscopy has some complications which the surgeon should be aware of intraoperatively and postoperatively .The most common complication is neurological injury . Vascular injury is the second most common complication .Other complications include thrombophlebitis , bacterial infection , breakage of the instruments , tourniquet paresis and damage to the intraarticular structure .

However , the ankle arthroscopy remains a tool between two hands of a surgeon that he can use it however and whenever he wants to , depending on the medical history of the patient , the clinical assessment , and the results of the investigations .