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Arthroscopic Ankle Fusion Offers Patients Higher Fusion Rates with Reduced Pain and Recovery Time

When the constant pain in his ankle slowly began affecting his hip and back, Brent Halvorson knew he had to go to the doctor. The elementary teacher previously suffered a broken right tibia and fibula in 1992. Calcium deposit build-ups over the years following the surgical repair slowly caused increasing pain and decreased range of motion in his ankle. After a consultation with Orthopedic Surgeon, Dr. Stacy Bacon, Mr. Halvorson realized his need for surgery. Dr. Bacon discussed a new procedure, Arthroscopic Ankle Fusion, that she felt may benefit him.

Arthroscopic Ankle Fusion is a cutting-edge procedure for those with ankle arthritis that offers patients a 90 – 97% successful fusion rate. The standard “open” ankle fusion procedure typically performed offers only an 80 – 90% primary fusion rate (meaning successful fusion following the first operation). Arthroscopic ankle fusion is performed using two standard small incisions for ankle arthroscopy as well as two to three additional small incisions to place the screws required for fixation. Besides the success rate, one of the main advantages of this procedure in comparison to the “open” procedure is the **reduction in pain and recovery time**. In an open procedure, patients are typically hospitalized for 2 – 3 days with the limiting factor being post-operative pain. Many times these patients must avoid walking for multiple weeks with a non-removable fiberglass cast that is often on for up to 12 weeks.

With the arthroscopic ankle fusion, the procedure is performed as an outpatient procedure with a dramatic reduction in the patient’s level of pain. With this procedure, minimal bone removal and minimal soft tissue disruption result in a joint which is inherently stable (with screw fixation) and provides for optimum conditions for union. This minimal tissue disruption is what helps to alleviate a good deal of the pain.

“I am feeling good. I took pain medication the first 2 – 3 days and very sporadically since then. More recently, if needed I would take an “over the counter” pain reliever. This is better than I ever expected to feel following surgery.” reports Mr. Halvorson. Orthopedic Surgeon, Dr. Bacon reports, “He is doing very well. He experienced very little pain or swelling at his first

post operative visit, which is far ahead of someone who undergoes the traditional ankle fusion.” Mr. Halvorson was placed in a cast and will be non-weight bearing and on crutches for approximately 8 weeks. He looks forward to getting back to riding his bike and enjoying an active life pain-free.

For more information about Arthroscopic Ankle Fusion, contact Dr. Bacon’s office at 281-955-7577 or call Stacy Thornton, Director of Marketing at North Cypress Medical Center at 832-912-3846.

North Cypress Medical Center is a 92-bed physician owned acute care hospital located in Cypress (northwest Houston area), Texas. The hospital offers patients state-of-the-art medical care and technology in an upscale, five-star hotel-like atmosphere. Medical services include Cardiology, Critical Care, Emergency Care, Orthopedics including a Total Joint and Spine Center, Cancer care including Radiation Oncology, and Surgical Weight Loss. Visit our website at ncmc-hospital.com for more information.

Dr. Bacon is an Orthopaedic Surgeon with subspecialty fellowship training in foot and ankle surgery. She is an All-American track athlete from Rice University where she graduated with honors (magna cum laude). She finished in the top of her class at the University of Texas Medical School at Houston (Alpha Omega Alpha). She finished her Orthopaedic residency at the University of Colorado. She completed a foot and ankle fellowship at Baylor University in Dallas under the direction of James Brodsky, MD and John Early, MD. She is a team physician for Rice University Athletics and Cypress Woods High School. She has a special interest in forefoot deformities and ankle injuries and reconstruction. She is in practice with Advanced Orthopedics and Sports Medicine, Cypress’ premier Orthopedic Surgery group.