



INFORMATION FOR GENERAL PRACTITIONERS

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Why provide information for GPs?

As the structure of Healthcare changes, there is increasing pressure for patients to be investigated and treated in Primary Care. Our aim is to provide information for GPs to enable them to achieve this, thus allowing a reduction in the referral of patients who could be treated in Primary Care and minimising the delays in treatment once patients have been referred.

What information can I give to my patients?

We have provided a large number of patient information leaflets for the most common conditions that we see and treat. These are available in PDF format as single side A4 sheets. Feel free to download these and provide them to your patients or inform patients with internet access, of the website details.

How do I know what non-surgical treatment DFAC recommends for the common conditions of the Foot & Ankle?

On each patient information leaflet, we have provided, where appropriate, details of the non-surgical treatment that we recommend for each condition. Please refer to each diagnosis for further information.

Investigations

Which x-rays should be requested for patients with Foot & Ankle conditions?

In general, all views, other than oblique views, should be *weight-bearing* (standing). We would recommend the following views:

- Ankle conditions such as arthritis, sprains and Achilles tendon problems
 - AP (antero-posterior) weight-bearing of ankle
 - Lateral weight-bearing of ankle
- Other hind and midfoot conditions such as arthritis, peroneal and Tibialis Posterior tendon problems, teenagers with flat feet, midfoot pain
 - AP weight-bearing of ankle
 - AP weight-bearing of foot
 - Lateral weight-bearing of whole foot
 - Oblique of foot
- Forefoot conditions such as bunions, hallux rigidus, metatarsalgia, hammer toes, stress fractures
 - AP weight-bearing of foot
 - Lateral weight-bearing of whole foot
 - Oblique of forefoot

When is Ultrasound useful in diagnosing Foot and Ankle conditions?

The following conditions are very accurately diagnosed by ultrasound and could be arranged prior to referral. Please note that ultrasound is very user-dependant. We would therefore recommend referral for this investigation to Radiologists in whom you have confidence as to their knowledge and experience and with whom you (and we at The Dorset Foot & Ankle Clinic) are able to personally discuss results:

- Achilles tendon problems
- Peroneal tendon and Tibialis Posterior tendon problems
- Soft tissue swelling, when the diagnosis is in doubt

Is ultrasound useful in diagnosing Morton's neuroma?

It is now well accepted in the Orthopaedic literature that the most accurate means of diagnosing Morton's neuroma is with a good history and thorough clinical examination. We would only use ultrasound if the clinical picture is not typical, or the diagnosis is in doubt, as it is well recognised that both ultrasound and MRI have a high false positive and negative incidence. Please see the patient information leaflet on Morton's neuroma for further details.