



NEW ENGLAND  
ORTHOPEDIC SURGEONS

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## THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT FOOT and ANKLE FUSION

### 1. It's a Project

2. The goal of this project is to give you a foot that hurts dramatically less; the price to pay for pain relief is some degree of stiffness.
3. You must be **non-weight bearing** for 2 to 3 months.
4. You must **be a fanatic** about non-weight bearing – weight bearing too soon dramatically increases the risk of failure.
5. Your splint will be changed in two weeks to a fiberglass cast.
6. You must wear a **cast for 4 weeks after that for a total of 6 weeks of protection**
7. You will transition from a cast to walking in a removable boot.
8. This transition to weight bearing takes 1 to 2 months.
9. People typically feel pretty well about 3 to 4 months after surgery.
10. Normal shoe wear resumes from 3 to 6 **months**.
11. You will be **swollen** for months and months.
12. You may be unable to **return to driving**, particularly if it involves the Right side, for **6 to 8 weeks**.
13. The timing of return to work depends on what you do, and how much work can accommodate your necessity to keep it elevated, and perhaps minimize or alter your work duties. Dr. McDonald will be happy to provide out of work documentation for your employer as necessary and appropriate.
14. In the end, most people end up happy; the rate of patient satisfaction is high.
15. Most patients take **a year** to fully recover.