



NIKHIL NANAVATI

Rheumatoid Arthritis



Introduction

An inflammatory arthritis (e.g. Rheumatoid arthritis) is different to ‘wear and tear’ arthritis (osteoarthritis). In inflammatory arthritis, there is usually a degree of inflammation within the joint which causes the joint to be destroyed as opposed to ‘wear and tear’ arthritis which is due to ‘over-use’ (e.g. as we age). Inflammatory arthritis such as Rheumatoid arthritis can be extremely debilitating as it usually affects multiple joints, especially when concerning the feet. This can cause difficulty with footwear, pain and lead to a condition called ‘metatarsalgia’ which means ‘painful metatarsals (bones in the foot).’ There are many surgical procedures that can be considered to reduce the pain and improve the foot shape when related to inflammatory arthritis.



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Treatment

Orthotics: Footwear modification with wider toe boxes can help to alleviate pressure and therefore reduce the pain. Depending on the problems experienced by patients, further footwear modification may be required to aid and assist with walking.

Injection: Injections with steroid and anaesthetics can be performed under X-ray guidance to reduce the pain, swelling and inflammation in the joints.

Surgery: Surgery needs to be tailored depending on the specific problems experienced by the patients. Depending on the area of the foot affected, consideration of **fusion surgery, tendon releases and realignment** needs to be discussed with the patient.

Patients will also be provided with a personalised treatment plan following their individual operations.