PATIENT INFORMATION SHEET

	ARTHRITIS OF THE JOINTS IN THE ARCH OF THE FOOT

Arthritis in the arch of the foot deforms and flattens the foot, xrays show the extent of the damage and the surgical repair of the complaint

JOINTS AROUND THE ANKLE	The joints in the arch of the foot adapt the foot to the ground surface. As a result they work very hard and can wear out developing painful arthritis.
SYMPTOMS OF ARTHRITIS	Arthritis of these joints often goes unnoticed until it has become quite advanced. There are many types of arthritis but osteoarthritis is the most common type to affect these joints. Early symptoms can include "aches" within the joints often occurring after activity. In later stages there may be persistent swelling around the joint or hard lumps around the edge of the joints. In some patients these lumps (called "osteophytes") are the cause of additional symptoms because they cause pressure on adjacent soft tissue structures.
DIAGNOSIS	Your consultant will be able to make a provisional diagnosis based up careful examination of the joints together with your history of symptoms. Further investigations with x-rays and more advanced scans such as MRI or CT can be necessary when assessing the foot due to the complex anatomy of this area. Generally osteoarthritis is progressive (gets worse with time). In the foot however it is believed that bracing and splinting may help protect painful arthritic joints. Such measure may help the local symptoms but also aid in protecting the joints from increased damage. It is not possible to "undo" damage caused by osteoarthritis.
TREATMENT OPTIONS	o Simple analgesics and anti-inflammatories o Joint injections using cortisone o Foot orthoses / bracing o Surgery to "clean-up the joints" o Surgery to fuse joints which are very badly arthritic
HOW DO I GET MORE INFORMATION	Fitter Feet For Life 34 North Street Clapham London SW4 0HD Tel 020 7627 4901 www. Fitterfeet.com