

Surgery Risks

The decision to proceed with surgery is based on a shared decision-making process between Dr. McGahan and his patient, which is YOU!

Dr. McGahan recommends surgery after considering the risks and benefits. In general, the potential benefits should outweigh the potential risks. Depending on your condition, there are several scenarios where Dr. McGahan may recommend surgery.

1. When surgery has a reasonable chance of improving the condition
2. When surgery may prevent worsening of the condition
3. When surgery may prevent complications associated with non-operative treatment
4. When surgery may speed recovery
5. When a patient has unacceptable pain (from patient/physician perspective)
6. When a patient has an unacceptable physical limitation or function (from patient/physician perspective)
7. When a patient has loss of range of motion
8. When a patient has deformity
9. In rare cases: when all nonoperative treatment options have failed, and a patient accepts the risks of surgery while acknowledging a low probability of surgical success but still chooses to proceed.

Every surgery has risks. These are the risks inherent in nearly EVERY ORTHOPEDIC SURGERY

1. Anesthesia risks: tooth injury, throat injury, sore throat, vocal cord injury, nerve injury, pneumonia, death
2. Medical Complications: pneumonia, UTI, heart attack, stroke, blood clot, pulmonary embolism, death
3. Infection: necessitating oral and/or IV antibiotics and possible additional surgeries and hospitalization
4. Wound healing issues, prolonged healing scar, keloid formation
5. Stiffness
6. Incomplete pain relief
7. Incomplete recovery
8. Re-injury
9. Fractures: non-union, mal-union, hardware complications necessitating additional surgery
10. Surgical complications necessitating additional surgery
11. DVT, blood clot, pulmonary embolism, death:
12. Need for additional surgery
13. Unique risks to a particular surgery: i.e. hip replacement: dislocation, leg length inequality, fracture, etc.

Standard Precautions:

1. Infection: watch for redness, warmth, swelling, or discharge from incision
2. DVT, blood clot, pulmonary embolism, death: watch for calf pain and swelling, difficulty breathing, fast heart rate.

Dr. McGahan discusses with each of his patients the rationale for surgery and the potential risks, benefits, and complications of orthopedic surgery in general as well as the particular surgery that YOU are undergoing. Every patient is given the opportunity to ask questions. When a patient decides to proceed with surgery, it should be understood that not every possible scenario or outcome could possibly be discussed or anticipated pre-operatively. YOUR CONSENT for surgery acknowledges the inherent risks and unpredictability of surgery. However, rest assured that Dr. McGahan and his team are dedicated to achieving the best possible outcome for YOU while minimizing potential complications/risks.