



Dr
**CHRISTOFF
MARAIS**

MBChB (Stell), FC Ortho, MMed (UCT)

Orthopaedic Surgeon
Foot & Ankle Specialist

Practice No: 0766569
HPCSA No: MP0635804
Tel: 021 2051840 / 0639849334
Email: dr.christoffmarais@gmail.com

Triple Arthrodesis

This is an operation to “fuse” or stiffen the **three** main joints of the back part of the foot (hence “triple fusion”).

Why would it be performed?

Triple fusions are performed for two main reasons:

- Arthritis of the joints. such as osteoarthritis due to a previous injury or rheumatoid arthritis.
- Severe deformity of the foot such as a flat foot, high-arched or “cavus” foot, a club foot or other deformity.

What does it involve?

Two incisions are made, one along the outer side of the foot over the side of the heel and one on the top of the foot. Each of the three joints is opened; the joint surfaces removed and, if necessary, reshaped to correct a deformity. The joints are then put in the correct place and fixed together with screws or plates.

The heel (“subtalar”) joint is usually fixed with a screw passed through a small cut in the back of the heel. The other joints are fixed through the main cuts. It is usually necessary to put some extra bone into a triple fusion to encourage it to heal and to fill any gaps in the fusion left by correcting the deformity. Often, this extra bone can be obtained from the bone that is cut out to prepare the fusion.

Sometimes, there is insufficient bone from this, and bone has to be taken from the tibia bone just below the knee. Occasionally, if a large amount of bone is required, it must be taken from the pelvis just above the hip or taken from a bone bank.

For those with a tight Achilles tendon (“heel cord”) or weak muscles, or both, the Achilles tendon may be lengthened during surgery by making small incisions in the calf and stretching the tendon. Some people with deformities of the foot also have



Dr
**CHRISTOFF
MARAIS**

MBChB (Stell), FC Ortho, MMed (UCT)

Orthopaedic Surgeon
Foot & Ankle Specialist

Practice No: 0766569
HPCSA No: MP0635804
Tel: 021 2051840 / 0639849334
Email: dr.christoffmarais@gmail.com

deformed toes. These may be corrected at the same time or more often at a later operation.

For more information on what to expect after surgery, please speak to your surgeon for more detailed information.