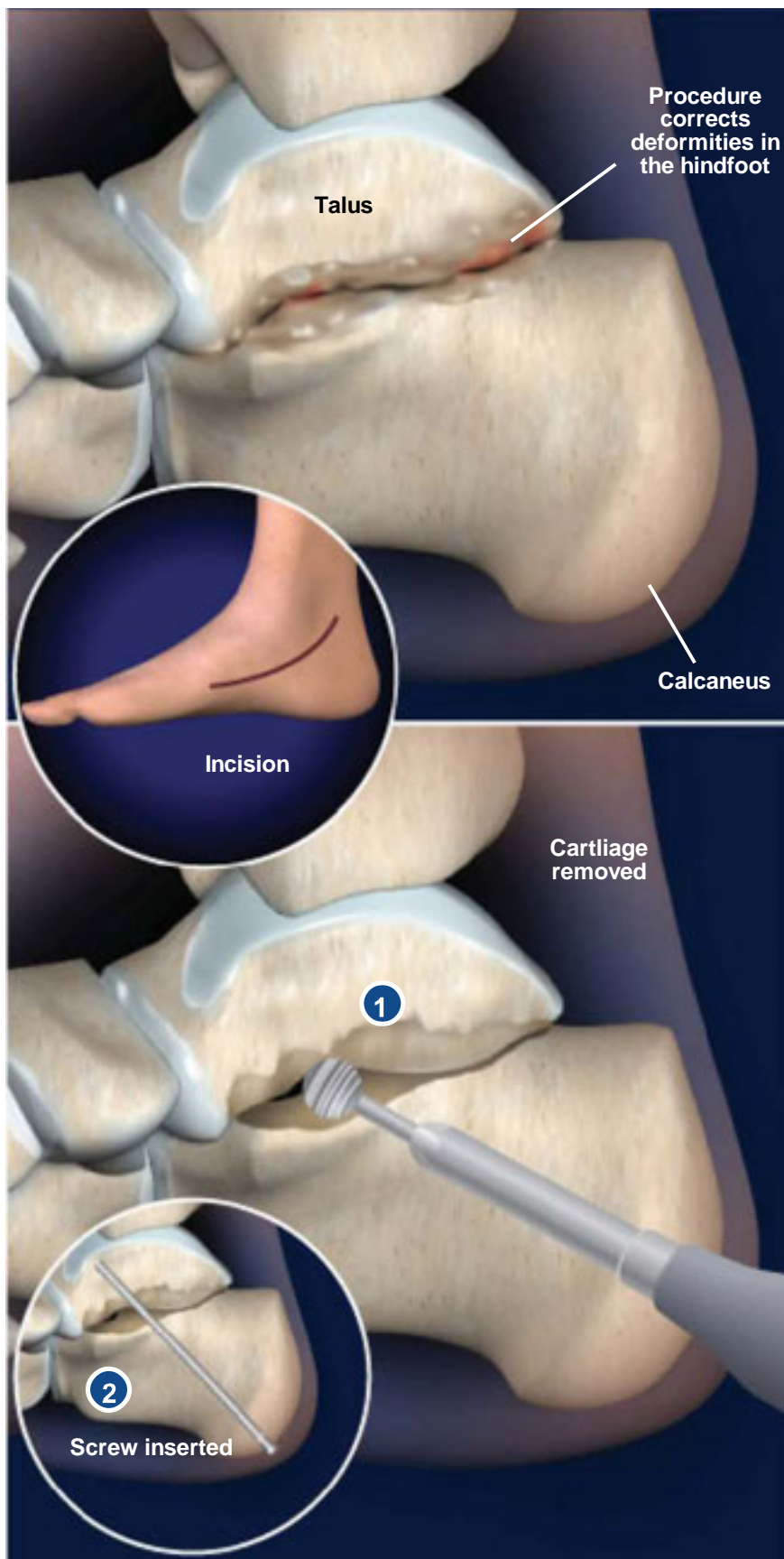


Subtalar Fusion



Overview

This surgical procedure is used to help relieve pain in the joint beneath the ankle joint and correct deformities in the hindfoot caused by injury, arthritis, or genetic defect. The procedure fuses the calcaneus (the heel bone) to the talus, the bone that connects the foot to the ankle.

Preparation

The patient is positioned so that the outer side of the foot is clearly visible to the surgeon. Anesthetic is administered and the area is cleaned and sterilized.

Accessing the Ankle Joint

An incision is made on the outside of the foot, just below the ankle. The joint between the calcaneus and talus is examined and all remaining cartilage between the bones of the subtalar joint is removed. If the heel bone is misaligned, its position is corrected.

Fusing the Joint

One or more screws are inserted into the bones to stabilize them. Bone graft may be packed around the space between the bones to aid in the fusion process.

End of Procedure and After Care

The incision is closed with sutures or surgical staples. The ankle may be placed in a brace or half-cast, and a short hospital stay will be required. Weight should not be applied to the foot for at least six weeks after the surgery. A walking cast may then be used for at least another six weeks. Full recovery usually takes up to ten months.