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**REVOLUTIONARY NEW “LIM PROCEDURE” CUTS ANKLE
SPRAIN/SURGERY RECOVERY TIME IN HALF**

Named for Local Chicago Area Surgeon Who Invented Procedure

Chicago – It’s hard to argue with success and Robert Lim, DPM has had it in abundance. Through 14 years and over 300 procedures to stabilize weak, oft-injured ankles, he has never had a failure. Not One.

That includes the 78-year-old lady who was thrilled she could simply walk around and shop again without constantly falling; a former National Football League lineman whose fears were allayed that the years of wear and tear on his ankles would leave him permanently disabled; a 90 pound gymnastics star whose dreams of making the US Olympic team were preserved and a Chicago Fire Juniors player whose professional aspirations remain alive and well.

Dr. Lim’s unique, eponymously-named procedure for lateral ankle instability creates a new, functional ligament without altering the anatomy of the foot or ankle, and returns the patient to pre-injury form within as little as four weeks. In contrast, traditional techniques require up to six months’ recovery, extensive physical therapy and often, are simply aimed at allowing patients to walk painlessly.

“He came to my rescue,” says John Edwards, an offensive lineman with the Baltimore Colts and St. Louis Cardinals. “I had no success with any of the three other doctors I saw. A couple of them thought I had flat feet. I was literally just shuffling along because my ankles could go out at any time.” Now exercising regularly, Edwards bikes and rows with no pain and is able to walk normally. “Today my ankles are stronger than ever,” Edwards says. “I’m very grateful to him.”

C.J. Brown, of the Major League Soccer (MLS) Chicago Fire and Coach of the Chicago Fire Juniors, also is amazed by the success of Dr. Lim’s procedure and the short recovery time. “It’s impressive,” Brown says of the continued recovery of a young charge with huge potential, Kyle Breitenbach, who broke a bone in his foot. Once Dr. Lim treated the break, he found serious abnormalities in both of Kyle’s ankles that portended chronic lateral ankle instability and a short career.

“He shouldn’t have been playing for six months after being treated for an injury like that,” Brown says, “but he was out jogging around in two or three weeks (after treatment). He came out to practice one day and I asked him what he was doing there. He said he could run and I thought he was making a mistake. So I talked to Dr. Lim and he said Kyle was on schedule. For a kid like him, the best part is that it’s not just healing the broken part of his foot, but also fixing his mechanics so he doesn’t fall back into those problems. That’s so important to a coach and a player.”

Since 2001 Dr. Lim has served as the podiatric physician for the Chicago Fire and serves as a team doctor for the U.S. Soccer Federation. He has successfully treated athletes from the NFL, NBA, Major League Lacrosse, and collegiate teams, as well as marathoners, dancers, and young gymnasts with Olympics aspirations.

The US Census Bureau reports there are 1 million ankle injuries annually and 85 percent of those are sprains. That's equivalent to one in every 272 Americans. Ankle sprains also comprise 45 percent of sports related injuries, according to the journal Clinics in Podiatric Medicine and Surgery. The term "ankle sprain" sounds harmless and fleeting, but left untreated a sprain can develop into more debilitating conditions including osteoarthritis, synovitis and bone spurs. Eventually, these injuries can affect the foot, knee, hip and lower back.

Dr. Lim developed and refined his procedure over several years as he saw many top athletes succumb to ankle injuries that were treated unsuccessfully with traditional surgery. The condition he treats, lateral ankle instability, typically results from severe or repeated ankle sprains that stretch and weaken, or rupture and tear, the ligament that gives the joint its strength and stability. Any one sprain results in a ligament that is not functioning properly and the ankle involved is more prone to sprains that will weaken it further.

"Surgical options developed from the 1930s to the late 1960s are still used today because nothing better had come along," Dr. Lim says. "Essentially the traditional surgeries require three to six months of recovery time and even then, there's no guarantee that an athlete will get back to playing sports."

Those procedures reroute a damaged or torn ligament to the ankle bone with allografts or autografts, which take considerable time to heal. Dr. Lim's approach employs a soft tissue implant anchored with sutures. Essentially, he creates a new ligament using the suture materials, which over time become integrated with fibrotic tissues that restore ankle support. Rather than the two or three hours it may take for traditional ankle surgery, Dr. Lim's procedure takes about 30 to 45 minutes and requires less anesthesia.

"The reason recovery is so much faster is because there is no waiting for old ligament us tissue to heal. Also, my procedure allows the tightness and stability of the ankle to be tested intra-operatively," Dr. Lim says. "The ligament isn't a rubber band. It does stretch, but if it's injured it just remains stretched. If you put it back and graft it to the bone, it may or may not heal."

"I expect that about half the medical community will embrace the Lim Procedure as revolutionary and the rest will respond with a certain amount of skepticism," Dr. Lim says, "until they witness the success. The people most interested have been physical therapists and trainers because they do rehabilitation, and they see the difference between other procedures and mine."