

POSITION STATEMENT



American College of
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Position Statement on COVID-19 and Non-Emergent Surgical Procedures

Considering the rapidly growing health concerns with COVID-19, the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons supports the direction taken by American College of Surgeons (ACS) and the Centers for Disease Control and Preventions (CDC).

The ACS [COVID-19: Guidance for Triage of Non-Emergent Surgical Procedures](#), which “calls to curtail “elective” surgical procedures, provides a well thought out guidance on the management of non-emergent operations. In the absence of surgical intervention, it is important to recognize that the decision to cancel or perform a surgical procedure must be made in the context of numerous considerations, both medical and logistical.”

The ACS recommends the following:

- Hospitals and surgery centers should consider both their patients’ medical needs and their logistical capability to meet those needs in real time.
- The medical need for a given procedure should be established by a surgeon with direct expertise in the relevant surgical specialty to determine what medical risks will be incurred by case delay.
- Logistical feasibility for a given procedure should be determined by administrative personnel with an understanding of hospital and community limitations and taking into consideration facility resources (beds, staff, equipment, supplies, etc.) as well as provider and community safety and well-being.
- Case conduct should be determined based on a merger of these assessments using contemporary knowledge of the evolving national, local and regional conditions recognizing that marked regional variation may lead to significant differences in regional decision making.
- The risk to the patient should include an aggregate assessment of the real risks of proceeding and delaying, including the expectation that a delay of six to eight weeks or more may be required to emerge from an environment in which COVID-19 is less prevalent.

More information can be found on the website of the [American College of Surgeons](#).

The American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons (ACFAS) is a professional society of more than 7,700 foot and ankle surgeons. Founded in 1942, ACFAS seeks to promote the art and science of foot, ankle, and related lower extremity surgery, address the concerns of foot and ankle surgeons, advance and improve standards of education and surgical skill, and advance and advocate for the highest standards of patient care and safety.