Traumatology and reconstructive surgery at a leading university hospital

Professor Hans-Christoph Pape is head of the Department of Orthopaedic Trauma and Reconstructive Surgery at Aachen University Hospital. He and his team of highly skilled, widely acclaimed specialists offer traumatology and reconstructive surgery at a leading university hospital.

Professor Hans-Christoph Pape FACS, Medical Director of the Department of Orthopaedic Trauma and Reconstructive Surgery at Aachen University Hospital

The Department of Orthopaedic Trauma and Reconstructive Surgery, like all medical departments on site, benefits from the unique layout of Aachen University Hospital. This is one of the largest hospital buildings in Europe, uniting diagnostics and therapy, research and teaching all under the same roof. The patients of Professor Pape benefit from the compact arrangement of the hospital, the way his department works closely with others on a interdisciplinary basis and the systematic integration of research and medical care. Every year his team handles more than 15,000 emergency cases and performs over 3,000 operations. The department's catchment area extends well beyond the local region, attracting patients from Germany and abroad.

Professor Pape, as well as acute trauma treatment, spinal surgery and joint surgery and prosthetics, your department has proven medical expertise in the field of reconstructive surgery.

Professor Pape: Yes, that's an important part of what we offer here; after all, not every injury or bone fracture will heal without any problems. Healing a broken bone is, in practice, always a complex process. Many patients come to us with a diverse range of complications and a long history of suffering. This includes, for example, growth disorders of the bones, muscles and skin – which have severe consequences for the patient: the limbs are often unable to withstand stress and deformities of the bones may develop. Correcting this requires a high degree of clinical experience due to the risk of repeat malformation or even infection-related complications, which are to be avoided at all costs.

How can you and your team help in these cases?

Professor Pape: We offer comprehensive diagnostics and state-of-the-art procedures for the treatment of misalignments and pseudoarthrosis, which can be the result of badly healed fractures due to defects in the bone. We put you on the road to recovery with new procedures, availing ourselves of bone material from your own body, which we obtain from the thigh. We have been performing this cutting-edge procedure with great success for a number of years now and are continually working to improve it.

What part do computer-assisted techniques play?

Professor Pape: A central part. For example, we have had great success in using new computer-assisted procedures for imaging. This enables us to monitor the positioning of the bone while the operation is taking place. This digital technology allows us to see a 3D image of the position of the bones, right after we have set them. This works in many different corrective surgeries, including on the hip, the spine and the limbs. The procedure meets the latest technical standards and is continually updated thanks to our close links to clinical research.