Introduction/Purpose: The current COVID-19 pandemic has created a unique problem for orthopaedic surgeons by mandating 'social distancing' and limiting patient-provider interactions. Centers have reacted to this by implementing Telemedicine as a way to still provide care for patients. We have developed a Telemedicine protocol we believe allows for enough information to be gathered to provide an accurate diagnosis and with high patient satisfaction.

Methods: A 12-step standardized protocol was created to be used during foot and ankle Telemedicine visits. This was coupled with pre-visit preparation by the office staff with the patient as well as recommending appropriate follow-up either in person or again via Telemedicine. After implementation of this system in April 2020, we retrospectively reviewed Press-Ganey data collected for provider rating (scale 0-10) with Telemedicine visits and traditional office visits through June 2020. Scores of 9 and 10 out of 10 were grouped together to represent an excellent experience, and all other responses were grouped together as a less than excellent experience. Fischer’s exact test was used to compare samples.

Results: A total of 183 patients were surveyed during this time period, 127 from telemedicine visits and 56 from in-office visits. 106/127 (83.4%) patients surveyed after Telehealth visits and 50/56 (89.2%) after in-person visits rated their visit as a 9 or 10 (p=0.37).

Conclusion: The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way that orthopaedic surgeons have needed to deliver care to their patients. Though the transition has had its difficulties, it would be a failure in progress to not recognize and adopt the advances that have been made during this time. Though the adaption of Telemedicine was made out of necessity at our institution, the lessons learned during this trying time has enabled us to provide excellent orthopaedic care through telemedicine that can continue once restrictions have been lifted.