

Physiotherapy Department

Ankle pain advice sheet

There are several structures around the ankle joint which can be injured. These include muscles, cartilage and ligaments. Many ankle injuries or episodes of ankle pain will resolve within a few weeks by following the advice below.

Any of these structures may give you pain around the ankle, especially after an injury.

You can help to speed your own recovery and prevent further problems by following the simple P.R.I.C.E. regime and an exercise program. Keeping your pain under control is important to your recovery. See your GP or a pharmacist for advice regarding pain relief.

P = Protect. Protection against further injury will help the ankle to heal more quickly.

R = Rest. Avoid aggravating activities providing the ankle with periods of rest between exercises outlined below. Apply weight through the injured ankle as your pain allows.

I = Ice. Apply ice wrapped in a towel (a pack of frozen peas is excellent) to the ankle for up to 20 minutes. Repeat every 4 hours. This will help with bruising and swelling.

C = Compression. A tubigrip may be provided to help to reduce swelling. Avoid tight footwear. Wear supportive flat shoes such as trainers.

E = Elevation. Elevate the foot above the level of your hip, supported on a pillow whenever you are resting, in order to help reduce pain and swelling.



To prevent the ankle from becoming stiff, it is important to keep it moving gently. If these exercises cause severe pain, stop them. Try to do them 3-4 times a day.

While lying down

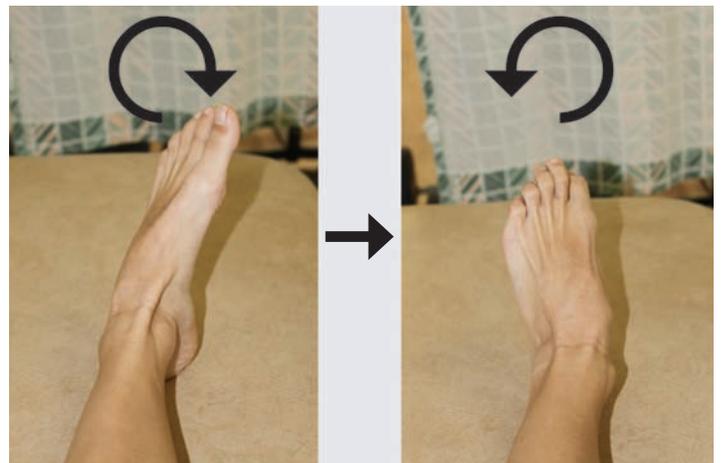
1 FEET UP AND DOWN

Pull the toes (feet) up as far as they will go, then point toes (feet) down as far as they will go. **Repeat 10 times.**



2 FEET IN AND OUT

Turn soles of feet in to face one another (keeping knees still). Then turn soles of feet out. **Repeat 10 times.**



3 TOE CURLS

Place towel under your feet and grip with toes, then relax.



4 CALF STRETCH

Use a towel to gently stretch the calf muscle. Hold for 15-20 seconds.



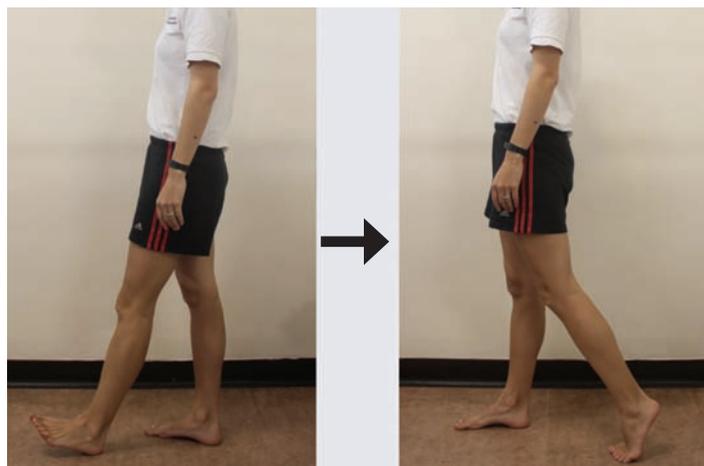
5 BALANCE

Balance on your affected leg for one minute. Progress by closing your eyes.



6 WALKING

When walking try to practice a normal walking pattern of striking the floor with the heel, rolling through the foot to push off with the toes.



You can return to normal activities as soon as the pain and swelling have fully resolved and the strength in your ankle has returned.

Only perform exercises to the start of your pain – never force yourself through pain. Stop them if the exercises increase your symptoms.

If your symptoms persist after this or significantly worsen, please seek medical advice.

Physiotherapy Department
Lewisham Healthcare NHS Trust
Lewisham High Street
LONDON
SE13 6LH

Tel: 020 8333 3148