

Ankle Injury

Patient Information

Musculoskeletal (MSK) Physiotherapy Service



The Patient Information Leaflets page on the Trust website is available on the link:
<https://www.wwl.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets> or scan the QR code.

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Disclaimer

Not all exercises are suitable for everyone and while every precaution was taken in selecting these exercises, they do not come without risks. If you have any concerns regarding injury, or whether or not you should partake in the exercises, then you should consult your GP or Physiotherapist prior to commencing any exercises shown here.

It is quite normal to feel some discomfort following exercise, but it is important that this discomfort eases within 2 hours of finishing the exercise and doesn't have an overall negative effect on your symptoms.

The exercise plans shown here are designed to be used as a guide and a point of reference, they are not exhaustive and can be modified and progressed under the supervision of your physiotherapist.

Introduction

Ankle injuries are usually a result of trauma and normally will improve within six weeks if adequately managed. The first 48 hours are when you will feel the most discomfort due to the active swelling, but this is then expected to ease.

Treatment

Most ankle sprains can be self-managed and do not require formal treatment.

PRICE

P	Protection	Good supportive footwear. You may be issued with a fixed walking boot if you attend the Walk-in-Centre. Use the boot whenever you are up standing on your foot for the first 4 weeks. The boot can be removed when resting and at night, to sleep.
R	Rest	“Relative” rest means removing excessive strain from the ankle. Reduce the length of time you spend standing and walking. Gradually increase activity and movement from 48 hours post injury onwards.
I	Ice	Use a bag of ice or frozen vegetables wrapped in a damp cloth and apply for approximately 20 minutes and NO LONGER . Repeat at least four times per day. Only apply an ice pack to skin if the skin has normal sensation and is not broken, damaged or cut.
C	Compression	Strapping or bandaging with light compression can help control Swelling.
E	Elevation	Raising your ankle above hip level, will help decrease swelling (e.g. sitting with your foot on a stool). Try and keep a slight bend at your knee to avoid overstraining the nerve at the back of the knee.

If your condition fails to improve any after **one week**; contact your GP, Physiotherapist, or the Walk-in Centre for further advice. It is not expected to **fully** recover for 6-8 weeks.

Early Movement

Early movement is essential for a full recovery but for the **first 24 / 48 hours** following injury is to continue with the advice on **PRICE**.

Ankle Range of Movement

The following exercises are to prevent your ankle from stiffening up too much and help to reduce swelling and discomfort. All exercises can be performed with supportive shoes or bare footed. The ankle will be stiff on waking so is essential to try and move the ankle as soon as you wake up. Repeat little and often throughout the day. Slight discomfort when performing the exercises is expected.

Pointing your Foot

- Sitting with legs out straight.
- Point your toes away from you then point them back towards you.
- Repeat this movement back and forth continuously for 3 x 30 seconds.
- A rolled-up towel placed under your ankle can make the movement easier.



Seated Towel Slides

- Sit on a chair with your foot on a towel (on wood, tile, or laminate floor) or glossy book (on carpet).
- Slide your foot out as far as you can and hold a stretch for 5 seconds.
- Slide your foot back as far as you are able; keep your heel in contact with the floor throughout. Push down through your foot as pain tolerable for 5 seconds.



Calf Stretch (Towel Assisted)

- Sitting with legs out straight.
- Hook a towel or belt around the foot and pull it back towards you, passively pointing your toes back. Aim to keep your 2nd toe aligned with your kneecap.
- Keep your leg straight throughout and feel the stretch in your Calf area.
- Hold for 5 seconds then relax.
- Occasionally push your toes / foot down into the towel, for 5 seconds.



Seated Heel Raise

- Sitting towards the edge of a chair with your feet flat on the floor.
- Lift your heels up, until only your toes remain in contact with the ground.
- Then slowly lower back down.
- Additional weight can be placed through your knees by either leaning or using weights onto your knees.



Sit to Stand (Chair Squats)

- Start by sitting on the edge of a chair with feet shoulder width apart.
- Attempt to stand up with/without using your hands.
- Bend from the hips, lean forward and drive up into a standing position.
- Aim to keep your kneecaps aligned with your second toes.



Turning your Foot Inwards

Only start turning your foot inwards from 2 weeks post injury. This allows time for the ligament to settle:

- Sitting with legs out straight.
- Turn your foot inwards; before then turning them outwards.
- Repeat this movement back and forth continuously for 3 x 30 seconds.



Single Leg Balance

- Aim to stand on one leg.
- Try keeping your pelvis level throughout.
- Ensure you begin by holding onto a **supported surface**. (i.e. Kitchen Worktop/back of a chair).

Aim to achieve **equal periods of time** held on both Legs.

Advice

We do not routinely bring you back to the hospital as these injuries recover well with self-management. Please contact the team if after 12 weeks you still have significant pain, or you are still having to use the boot and / or crutches at six weeks.

Fracture Clinic Physiotherapy Team: 01942 822103

Fracture Clinic Nursing Team: 01942 822109

If you live in the Wigan and Leigh area and are over 16 you can also self-refer into Physiotherapy by ringing any of the departments below:

Boston House Health Centre: 01942 482260

wwl-tr.mskphysio-bostonhouse@nhs.net

Leigh Infirmary: 01942 483413

wwl-tr.leighphysio@nhs.net

Platt Bridge Health Centre: 01942 482403

wwl-tr.mskphysio-bostonhouse@nhs.net

Comments, Compliments or Complaints

The Patient Relations/Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Department provides confidential on the spot advice, information and support to patients, relatives, friends, and carers.

Contact Us

Tel: 01942 822376 (Monday to Friday 9am until 4pm)

The Patient Relations/PALS Manager
Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Royal Albert Edward Infirmary
Wigan Lane
Wigan
WN1 2NN

Ask 3 Questions

Become more involved in decisions about your healthcare. You may be asked to make choices about your treatment. To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions:

1. What are my options?
2. What are the positives and negatives of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?



How We Use Your Information

For details on how we collect, use, and store the information we hold about you, please see patient information leaflet, Ref. **Corp 006** How we use your information, this can be found on the Patient Information Leaflets page on the Trust website, see details on the front cover.

This leaflet is also available in audio, large print, Braille, and other languages upon request. For more information, please ask in the department/ward.

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