

Avulsion Fractures of the Foot & Ankle

Patient Information

Trauma & Orthopaedic Department



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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Introduction

There are several small bones in the foot, and it is common for a fracture to occur in one of these bones. An avulsion fracture happens when a sprain of a ligament is strong enough to cause a small piece of bone to pull away; this is called an 'avulsion fracture'.



Healing

This injury will take around 6-12 weeks to heal. Smoking slows down the healing process. We advise that you stop (at least whilst recovering from your injury), speak to your General Practitioner (GP) or you can go online at <https://www.nhs.uk/smokefree>.

We do not routinely follow up these injuries; they recover well with self-management. Please contact the Fracture clinic after 12 weeks if you still have significant pain, or if you are still needing to use the boot at 6 weeks.

Caring for your injury week 1-4

Remember to wear your boot when standing or walking for the first 4 weeks. You can take the boot off to sleep at night and when resting.

Using ice can help with your pain and swelling. Wrap a damp tea towel around a bag of frozen peas and place it on your foot and ankle for up to 15 minutes, each hour, as needed. Do not use ice if the feeling in your foot or ankle is reduced, or if you have skin problems.

Rest your ankle for the first 24 – 72 hours after your injury. Sit more than usual and keep your foot lifted off the floor on a stool or cushions. This will help to reduce the swelling.

Ankle exercises

Movement of your foot and ankle is important to help your circulation and reduce the risk of developing a blood clot (deep vein thrombosis or DVT).

Start these exercises now, moving as far as you can comfortably. Repeat 3-4 times a day.

	• Point your toes down as far as you can. • Pull them up toward you. • Repeat for 15-30 seconds.
	Add this exercise two weeks after your injury • Make gentle circles with your foot in one direction. • Make gentle circles with your foot in the opposite direction. • Repeat for 15-30 seconds.
Seated Ankle Glides 	• Sit on a Chair; keep your heel in contact with the floor throughout. Slide your foot out. • Slide your foot back as far as you are able. Aim for FULL movement. Repeat 12-15 times.
Calf Stretch 	• Stand with injured leg out behind, feet facing forwards or if sitting hook a towel around your foot and pull back towards you. • Keep your leg straight, feel the stretch in your calf. • Hold 20-30 seconds. • Repeat 3 times.

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 does not have an overall negative effect on your symptoms.

Caring for your injury week 4-6

You can now stop using your boot. To start with, try it for short periods around the house. Build up to longer amounts of time in one go and walking outdoors.

Gradually increase the amount of time you spend up on your feet along with your general, day to day activity levels.

Caring for your injury, week 6-12

It is normal to still have some swelling and discomfort. This may continue up to a year after your injury.

You should no longer be using your boot or crutches. You are now ready to start to challenge your foot and ankle more, with harder exercises. This last stage of rehabilitation is important to improve your balance and reduce the risk of you injuring your ankle again. You should gradually return to activity and sport; this includes running, jumping and dancing.

Now start these exercises to improve your balance:

Single Leg Balance



- Hold onto your kitchen worktops or the back of a chair to start. Stand on your injured leg and balance. Gradually reduce the need to hold onto anything (like in the photo).
- Closing your eyes makes the exercise harder.
- Standing on something wobbly (like a cushion) makes this harder still.

Aim for 20-30 seconds of balancing.

Disclaimer

Not all exercises are suitable for everyone, and while every precaution has been taken in selecting these exercises, they do not come without risks. If you have any concerns regarding your injury, or whether you should partake in the exercises, then you should consult your physiotherapist or GP before beginning any exercises in this leaflet.

The exercise plans shown in this leaflet are designed to be used as a guide and a point of reference; they can be modified and progressed under the supervision of your physiotherapist.

Frequently asked questions

When can I drive?

It is your own responsibility. You are allowed to drive when:

- You can safely control the car
- You are no longer using the boot
- You are walking normally
- You can perform an emergency stop.

When can I go back to work?

This depends on your individual situation. You should return to work as soon as you feel able to do your job safely.

What do I do with my boot and crutches once I have finished with them?

Please return crutches to Fracture Clinic or Emergency Department. You do not need to return your boot.

For more information online, please visit <https://www.wwl.nhs.uk/virtual-fracture-clinic>

If you have any concerns regarding your ankle, contact:

Fracture Clinic: 01942 822595 Monday to Friday (8.30am until 5.00pm)

If you have any urgent concerns out of hours, please call 111.

Adult MSK Physiotherapy Self-Referral

If you are struggling to regain your movement or get back to normal activities, you can self-refer to **Physiotherapy**. A referral form can be found on this webpage:

<https://www.wwl.nhs.uk/adult-msk-physiotherapy-self-referral>



Please scan the QR Code to access the website.

Telephone Numbers:

Boston House Health Centre Telephone 03007071113

Leigh Infirmary Telephone 03007071597 / 03007071595

Platt Bridge Health Centre Telephone 03007071772

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)

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Wigan Lane
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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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