Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

# Avulsion Fractures of the Foot & Ankle

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# Avulsion Fractures of the Foot & Ankle

Patient Information

## Trauma & Orthopaedic Department


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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.









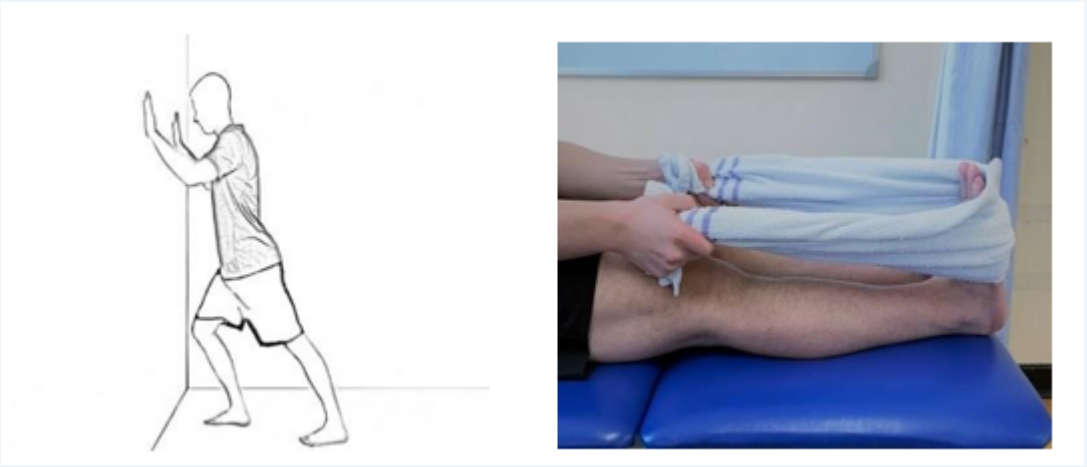
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Seated Ankle Glides





Calf Stretch



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<br> | • Hold onto your kitchen worktops or the back chair to start. Stand on your injured leg and balance. Gradually reduce the need to hold anything (like in the photo).<br>• Closing your eyes makes the exercise hard<br>• Standing on something wobbly (like a cushi makes this harder still.<br><br>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 Helpline: 01942 822595** Monday to Friday (8.30am until 5pm).
Please leave an answer message with patient details and we will return your call.

Monday to Friday (8.30am until 5pm).

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



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