

## Leaflet 7 Ankle Sprain

Following your injury, your ankle may be painful and swollen and you might be having difficulty walking. If you follow the advice given on this sheet, it will speed up your recovery and minimize future problems.

Initially you should follow the RICE regime – **R**est, **I**ce, **C**ompression and **E**levation. You should continue with this until the swelling goes down.

### **Rest**

Minimise weight bearing for 48 hours. Increase weight bearing as pain permits. You may need crutches or a stick initially.

### **Ice**

Apply crushed ice or frozen peas in a damp towel for 10-15 minutes. Leave off for at least 15 minutes before re-applying. Avoid using heat over the painful area.

### **Compression**

Use a crepe bandage or tubigrip (see local chemist) from toes to just below the knee. Make sure it is the right length. Do not apply if you have any problems with your circulation or if you have had a recent thrombosis. Check the area below the injured site for coldness/pallor which may suggest that the compression is too tight.

### **Elevation**

Keep foot above hip level whilst resting (your whole leg should be supported to prevent strain of the back of your knee). Remove the tubigrip or bandage in this position and also for sleeping.

### **Exercises**

After **24** hours you should start these exercises. All exercises should be repeated 10 times, 4 times a day, making the movement as large as the pain will allow.

1. Pull your foot up towards you and then point your foot downward

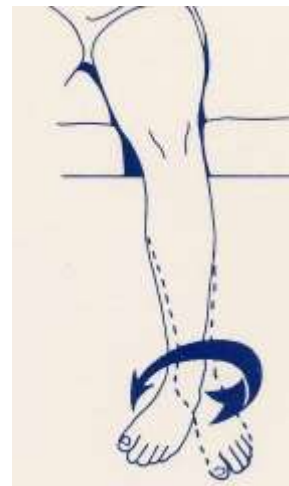


2. Turn your foot up and out and then downwards and inwards.



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3. Move your ankle around in circles.



Continue with these exercises to try to regain a full range of movement.

After **48 hours** you should start to put more weight through the foot as the pain allows. Remember to walk normally and place the heel down first before the ball of the foot.

When you are able to walk more comfortably you should add in the following exercises, to regain full **flexibility, strength and balance** to prevent recurrence. These should be performed 4 times a day.

4. Stand on your affected leg only and try to balance for 30 seconds. Compare with your other leg and continue practicing until you can balance for an equal length of time.

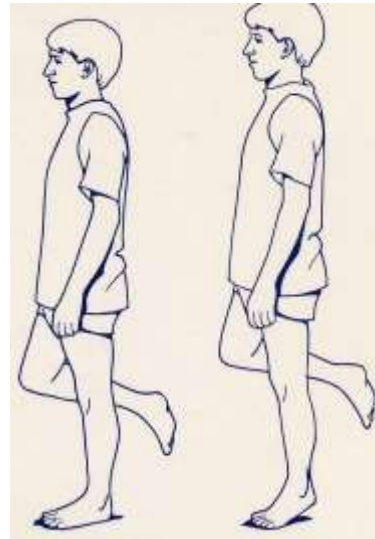
Once this has been achieved, progress the exercise by closing your eyes and balancing.



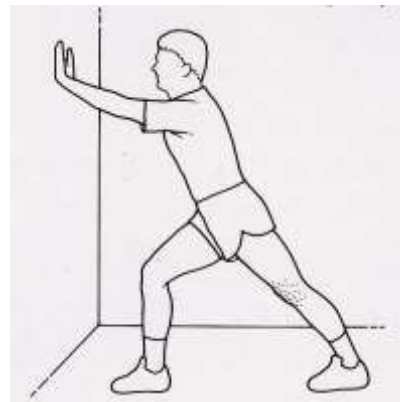
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- 5 Stand on your affected leg only. Raise and lower your heel as high as possible 10 times.

If initially unable to raise and lower your heel standing on one leg, try holding the back of a chair for balance, or try raising on both legs and progress to one leg when you feel able.



- 6 Stretch your Achilles tendon. Stand with your foot in front of the other about 2 feet apart (injured foot at the back). Keeping your heels on the floor and your back knee straight, bend your front knee until you can feel a stretch in your calf and hold for 15 seconds. Lean against a wall for support if required.



**Continue all these exercises until your symptoms resolve. This may take up to 10 weeks. Only return to sport when you have full movement and good balance.**